

Ac - 1 - 57
A
Divine Discovery

OF
SINCERITY,
According to its proper
and peculiar nature: very
profitable for all sorts of
persons to peruse.

First preached, and now
published, for the good of Gods
Church in generall.

By NICHOLAS LOCKYER
Master of Arts.

§ CCC. PSAL. 78. 37.
*For their heart was not right with him; nei-
ther were they stedfast in his covenant.*

PSAL. 119. 80.
*Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I
be not ashamed.*

LONDON,
Printed by E. G. for Iohn Rothwell, at the
Sunne in Pauls Church-yard. 1640.



TO THE
VERTVOVS LADY.
BRIDGET LYDDELL,
My much Honoured Aunt :
Grace and peace be multiplied
by Jesus Christ.

MAdam : 'Tis Gods
command to Abra-
ham, and in him
to us, That we
should walk be-
fore him, and
be perfect. *Absolute perfection*
God doth not there meane, but in-
tentionall: which is, when we desire
and endeavour with David, to have
all our waies conformed to all Gods
Statutes. *Intentionall perfection,*
A 2 is

The Epistle

is no other but sincere walking; and what this is, this tract now humbly presented to your Ladyship, will plainly make knowne unto you. A sincere heart, is a heart after Gods owne heart; which of all jewells which the Gentry, and Nobility weare, is the most resplendent, in the breast and bosome to be worne. The richest jeweller, Christ, proffers this pearle of great price; without money, or money-worth, and the multitude slight it, as a low prised thing, not worth the seeking after; but your Ladyship hath otherwise learned Christ: Many things Madam, may be convenient, but one is necessarie; to wit, a sincere heart. The acquiring of this, is the worke of our whole life: the setting forth of this, in its nature and lustre, is the worke of

Epistle of a sincere heart, presented to your Ladyship, by a sincere heart.

Dedicatory.

of Christs Ministers; the least, and unworthiest of all which, is your Nephew, which hath in this tract, done something to this effect; from which, if your Ladyship shall reape an increase of good, to that sweet stocke you have, I shall humbly blesse God. To whose blessing I commend your selfe and worthy Family; this worke, and the unworthy Author

Quam Viram

Quam Viram

Your much obliged Nephew,

NICHOLAS LOCKYER.



To the Christian Reader.



Christian Reader, Two things should be the principall matter of thy study; Christ and thine owne heart. The latter; to know thine owne misery; the former, to know Gods rich mercy, and how thou mayst be made partaker of it. So deceitfull is the heart of man naturally, that he *thinkes himselfe rich, and increased in goods,* and knowes not that he *is poore, and blind, miserable, wretched, and naked.* And untill this deceit and unsoundnesse be discovered, men will never seeke out for Christ, which is that *Gold tried in the fire,* which indeed makes poore man rich; and that *white rayment,* John speakes of, which indeed makes naked man comely, and covers all his deformity, from the all-seeing eye of him, which is perfect purity. The true knowledge of thine owne heart, this little tract will helpe thee to, by the blessing of God; if thou seriously peruse it, and humbly seeke to him, who is the searcher and discoverer of all hearts, to go
A 4 along

To the Reader.

along with thee, in the reading of it. Which
when once thou hast gotten, thou wilt be ca-
pable of the saving knowledge of Christ, and
restlesse till thou hast obtained it. And this
when acquired, will resolve thy doubting,
comfort thy mourning, and stablish thy stag-
gering soule: 'twill give thee peace and joy
unspeakable here, and bring thee to glory
and joy incomprehensible hereafter. To
which, the Lord bring thee, and me.

Nicholas Lockyer.



A Table of the chiefe heads handled in this Tract.

I. Proposition.

T*hat in simplicity, and godly sincerity, we ought to have our conversation in this world,* p. 10

The various acceptation of the word Simplicity, p. 10, 11

Sincerity distinguished into Morall and Theologicall, p. 11

What Morall sincerity is, p. 11, 12

What godly sincerity is, p. 13, 14, &c.

Why we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity to have our conversation in this world, p. 33, 34, &c.

*The application of this
first Doctrine.*

We should examine our selves by the description of sincerity, whether we walke as Paul did, to wit, sincerely, in this hypocriticall age. p. 40, 41, &c.

What we should doe, if upon examination we finde our selves hypocrites, p. 54

The cheating properties of hypocrisie, p. 54, 55, &c.



Considera-

The Table.

*Considerations to move the heart, to be
deeply and duely affected with hypocrisie.*
p.57,58,&c.

*Holy instructions to such, as upon ex-
amination finde themselves to be
as Paul in this present world,
to wit, sincere.*

I. To be humble, p.60

II. To hold fast our integrity, p.61,62

*The severall waies which there are, within
us and without us, to corrupt us from
that simplicity which is in Christ, p.61.
62,63,&c.*

*Sweet encouragements to persevere in our
sincere conversation, what ever mis-
eries we meet withall.* p.65,66

II. Proposition.

*That conscience can give testimony, con-
cerning the simplicity or hypocrisie of a
mans conversation,* p.67,68

What conscience is, p.69,70 &c.

*The grounds why God hath given this
power to conscience, to give testimony
concerning the simpicity or hypocrisie of
a mans conversation,* p.87,88,&c.

The application of this second point, p.95

*Seeing conscience can give testimony, con-
cerning the simplicity or hypocrisie of our*

cen

The Table.

conversation, we ought all, to take heed
how we order our conversation, p. 96, 97
Multitudes live as if there were no consci-
ence, God, nor Divell; the dreadfull
condition of such, p. 97, 98

Conscience should not be suspended, 99, 100
'Tis crying wickednesse; and 'tis incur-
able wickednesse, to offer violence to con-
science, p. 101

We should not sleight conscience in his
place, p. 102, 103

God will account the sleighting of consci-
ence, a contempt of his prime Court of
Justice here below, and those that sit
chiefe there, p. 104

What secret soule mischief comes by sleigh-
ting conscience, p. 105

We ought diligently to hearken to the voice
of conscience, and why, p. 105, 106

We ought to take consciences part, with or
against our selves, p. 107, 108

III. Proposition.

That consciousness to our selves, of the sim-
plicity and sincerity of our conversati-
on, will yeeld us joy in the midst of
troubles. p. 111, 112

Troubles distinguished into naturall and
accidentall, p. 114

The Table.

*What naturall troubles are; and how sweet-
ned by conscience,* p. 114, 115.

*What accidentall troubles are; and how
conscience makes a man rejoyce in the
midst of them,* p. 116, 117.

*Joy distinguished into sensuall and spiritu-
all,* p. 118.

What sensuall joy is, ibid.

What spirituall joy is, p. 118, 119, 120. &c.

Why divine joy is called spirituall, p. 119,
120, 121, &c.

*What joy 'tis that conscience comforteth in
troubles, to him that walketh sincerely,*
p. 130, 131.

*The grounds why, the testimony of consci-
ence concerning a mans simplicity must
needs cause joy in the midst of troubles,*
p. 131, 132, &c.

The application of this third point, p. 137.

*This Doctrine unfolds a riddle to blind
worldlings, which wonder to see a man
go rejoycing to prison.* p. 137.

*This Doctrine likewise shewes, that the
great designe of the wicked against the
godly is frustrate: which is, to deprive
them of all comfort, if they could,* p. 139,
140. &c.

*If consciencesse to our selves of the sincer-
ity*

The Table.

rity of our conversation will lessen and
sweeten troubles, consciouſnesse of hypo-
criste must needs imbitter all troubles,

p. 142, 143

Man that is borne to troubles as the sparks
flie upward, exhorted to get an upright
heart, and so an excusing conscience, to
comfort him in all troubles, p. 144, 145

What kind of joy 'tis that conscience rai-
ses in the soule, in times of trouble for
righteousnesse sake, p. 147, 148, &c.

What we should doe if walking sincerely, we
do not for all this, finde our consciences
raising sweet joy within us, in all our
bitter troubles for righteousnesse sake,

p. 155

What we ought to doe, if we doe finde the
joy of our sincere course, p. 156, 157

The sweet joy which ariseth to us from consci-
ence testifying our sincerity, should cause
us to keepe on in our sincere way, p. 160

What sorrow 'tis, which conscience as an
accuser for hypocrisie, causeth in the
soule, p. 162, 163, &c.

IV. Proposition.

That there be speciall times and occasions,
for the declaration of sincerity, which
ought to be observed, and answerably to
declare

The Table.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| declare, and shew our selves, | p. 177 |
| Personall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, | p. 181 |
| Personall occasions from the world, for the declaration of sincerity, | p. 181, 182 |
| Personall occasions from the flesh, for the declaration of sincerity, | p. 183 |
| Personall occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, from the Divell, | p. 185 |
| Domesticall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, | 186, 187 |
| Sociall or symmachicall occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, | p. 189, 190 |
| Nationall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, | p. 191, 192 |
| The reasons why God in the course of his providence, brings about speciall occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, | p. 196 |

I.

That the world and the divell may see that Gods people are indeed sincere. p. 196, 197

II.

That God may hereby admirably advance his owne glory, p. 199

III.

That God may admirably adde to the torture of the divell & his children, p. 201
That

The Table.

IIII.

That the joy of the upright may be augmented in this life, and in the life to come. p.202

The application of this fourth and last point. 203

Men which through wilfulnesse, and such as of weaknesse passe by speciall occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, blamed, p.203,204

When men wilfully passe by speciall occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, p.204,205

The causes why men wilfully passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, p.206

Their sin is very great, which wilfully shun speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity; & how this appeares. p.207,208

Such as passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity out of weaknesse, are to be blamed, of which see 4 sorts, p.209,210

Some ignorant of what is right; others of the time when that which is right, should be stood for, p.210,211

The dangers which ensue, by being ignorant of time or judgement. p.211,212

Some

The Table.

Some through carnall feare, passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity

p. 213

What such should doe for the cure of this evill,

p. 214

Some through carnall perswasion, passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity; and how this evill may be cured,

p. 215 216

Some out of carnall pittie, passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, and how this evill may be cured,

p. 216, 217

Seeing there be speciall times for the declaration of sincerity, we should diligently observe them; and how they may be knowne,

p. 218, 219

As we are to take notice of speciall time & occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, so we are to take hold of them, and how we may doe this aright,

p. 221, 222

Encitements to take hold of speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity,

p. 224

God calls for it,

p. 224

Conscience calls for it,

p. 227

Church and State calls for it,

ibid.

Soule and body will else severely smart for it.

p. 228



2 COR. I. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the World, and more abundantly to you-wards.



O grace, how glorious soever in the eye of man, goes for good weight in the eye of God, without sincerity: The greatest man in the world, weighed in the Balance of the Sanctuary, without this, will be accounted too light for Heaven. 'Tis a very needfull subject then, that this Text plainly profers to our consideration. And as excellent in it
B selfe,

selfe, as needfull to us, is sincerity.
 'Tis the precious extract, of all graces;
 and to call this a grace, is too little.
 'Tis that which gives to every grace
 its due lustre, in the eye of God; and
 to call any thing a grace in man, with-
 out this, is too much. 'Tis the glory of
 all graces, as the Sunne is the glory of
 all the Starres: 'tis the vitall blood of
 the soule; which that it may runne in
 the veines of you all, unto your eter-
 nall happinesse, have I chosen this
 Text to insist on: *For our rejoycing is
 this, the testimony of our conscience, that
 in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with
 fleshy wisdom, but by the grace of God,
 we have had our conversation in the
 world, &c.*

No condition is truly joyous with-
 out, and no condition is truly dolo-
 rous with sincerity. If a man be never
 so rich, never so honourable, yet if not
 withall sincere, there is no true joy in
 such a man: he laughes, but in the
 midst of laughter; his heart is oft times
 sad, and his conscience spoiles his
 sport. On the other hand; if a man be
 never so poore, never so much oppres-
 sed,

fed, which is the deadliest, and the most opposite enemy to joy of all, yet if that man be sincere, his heart may be as full of joy, as it can hold, for all this, as you may see in these words read, *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, &c.* Paul and Timothy have beene sincere servants of Jesus Christ, for the good of his Church amongst the Gentiles, and in this they had transcendant comfort in the midst of all the misery they met withall.

'Tis not misery, but sinne, that robs the soule of joy. Let a man labour to live sincerely, and then let men and divels doe what they can, or will, such a man shall never be bereaft of joy: he shall have joy in poverty, joy in disgrace, he shall have joy in prison, as much as in liberty, and much more; So had Paul and Timothy, which made them thus bravely breake out in the midst of misery, *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the*

World, and more abundantly to you-wards.

These words are the Apostles divine narration, of their happy condition in misery. And they containe two principall things, usefull for all men to be well acquainted withall, to wit, true joy, and the true ground of this desirable grace; which the Apostle here makes, sincerity, and that testimony which conscience gives thereof to the Soule. *For our rejoycing is this, what? why, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, that is, in integrity and uprightness, not with fleshly wisdom, that is, not with humane policy and eloquence, as men proudly depending upon our owne parts, and subtilly seeking our owne ends, in our preaching and living, but by the grace of God,* *ἐν χάριτι Θεοῦ, but in the grace of God,* saith the originall: that is, in the strength and assistance of God, which is a speciall fruit of his grace and favour, *We have had our conversation in the World; that is, we have carried our selves in life and doctrine amongst all, and more abundantly to you-wards;*

μεταξύ τῶν δὲ ὑμῶν, but *ſpecially amongſt you*, ſaith the Originall.

Divine joy is ſet forth unto us in this Text, according to its proper ſubject, and according to its proper riſe. The proper ſubject of divine joy, is the *righteous man*, as the Psalmiſt frequently notes : And this man is made the ſubject of Divine joy in my Text, *For [our] rejoycing, &c.* that is, we which are ſincere : hypocrits have nothing to doe with divine joy ; Their joy is ſuiteable to their ſpirits, deceitfull ; that which will flee from them, and not ſtand by them, as this joy of the Apoſtles did, when trials come.

For our rejoycing, boasting is this, ſo the word in the originall ſtrictly taken, ſignifies. Divine boasting, notes divine joy in the conſpicuous act thereof : It notes joy, as it hath ſtrongly ſeized upon the heart within ; and it notes joy as it hath ſtrongly ſeized upon the tongue, and face, and hands, without ; ſo that it is all one as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, *The cauſe of our ſtrong and open rejoycing is this.*

What? That they had made proviſion

for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it ? No : divine joy hath not such a Diabolical rise : The proper rise of divine joy , is the testimony of a pure conscience , concerning the uprightnesse of a mans conversation ; and this was the rise of *Pauls* and *Timothies* joy, in affliction. Their conscience bore witnessse with them, that in integrity and uprightnesse, not in flattery, policie, and subtilty, they had preached and lived amongst all men, as those that depended upon the strength and aid of *Christ* in every thing, and not upon any abilities of their owne, though they were endowed with greater humane gifts then any the false *Apostles* had. Thus they carried themselves in a plaine, downright, faithfull way, where ever they came to publish the Gospel of *Christ*, but specially amongst the *Corinthians*. To other Churches *Paul* used a more insinuating way of preaching ; but to this Church of the *Corinthians*, all plainnesse, and homeliness ; sparing no expressions, that might fully set forth their wicked waies, and thoroughly awaken their drowsie consciences, as hereafter in due place (God

(God willing) I shall shew unto you. The Church of the *Corinthians*, of all the Churches which *Paul* or other of the Apostles had planted, was most loose every way; and therefore *Paul* did not content himselfe with hints, & overtures; and wrap up bitter Pills, in sugred, glib-goe-down words; but with all godly boldnesse and plainnesse, beyond what he did to other Churches, he reprov'd them for, and upbraided them with their wickednesse; which is that he would have us apprehend, in this last clause of my Text. *But specially amongst you.*

Doctrine
deductio.

Severall propositions are to be noted, in this verse thus opened: as first this, *That in simplicity and godly sincerity, we ought to have our conversation in this World.* This truth is plainly intimated, by the Apostle; for he rejoyced that he had so ordered his conversation, as Christ required; not flattering and fauning, with fleshly wisdom in his preaching, to sooth men in their sinnes, and to bring about his owne ends, as false Apostles did; but faithfully reprov'g every vice, sparing

no plainenesse of speech, to such as otherwise would not be brought to see and bewaile their sinnes. Whether this way of preaching were pleasing or displeasing, to the World; whether it brought honour or disgrace to himselfe from the world, he heeded not, whilst he knew 'twas suitable walking to the Will of God.

Doct. 2.

A second proposition is this, *That conscience can give testimony, concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie, of a mans conversation.* This truth is also plainly intimated, in that the Apostle makes the testimony of his conscience concerning his integrity, the ground of his joy. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, (which had beene hypocriticall), but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the World, &c.*

Doct. 3.

A third proposition is this, *That conscioufnesse to our selves, of the simplicity and sincerity of our conversation, will yield us joy in the midst of troubles.* This truth is also intimated by the Apostle; for in the midst of all his troubles and miseries,

miserics, he rejoyed in this, that his conscience could beare witness with him, that *in simplicity and godly sincerity, he had ordered his conversation in this world.*

A fourth and last point observable is this, *That there be speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, which ought to be observed, and answerably to declare and shew our selves in our places.* This truth is also plainly set forth unto us in the Text; for *Paul* and *Timothy* thus carried themselves in their places, toward the Church of *Corinth*, which became very openly and grossely wicked, *ὡς ὡς ὡς δὲ ὡς; ὑμεῖς*, but specially amongst you. They had declared sincerity and uprightnesse in their ministry, amongst other Churches, by a faithfull reprovng of them, as occasion required, but no Church so scandalously carried themselves, as this Church, and therefore this Church needed, above all others, to be more thoroughly dealt withall; which the Apostles, as sincere men, considered, and answerably carryed themselves.

Doct. 4.

I begin

Doct. I.

Mat. 10. 16

Mat. 23. 20

I begin with the first of these, to wit, *That in simplicity and godly sincerity, we ought to have our conversation in this World.* Paul could not justly have joyed in the simplicity and sincerity of his conversation, had not his conscience told him, that so to walke, was to walke as Christ had commanded him. Christs charge to his Apostles (when he sent them forth) was, that they should be *ἀπλῶς ὡς τὸ περιστέριον*, *Simple as Doves*: that they should teach men to *observe all things whatsoever he commanded them*: now, Pauls conscience and *Timothies* both, bore witness with them, that thus they had walked in their places, and this made them to rejoyce, in the midst of all the hardship they underwent. As they had this charge in particular, so they had this charge in generall, with all the seed of *Abraham*, in these words, *Walke before me, and be thou perfect*: that is, sincere, *Gen. 17. 1.* So that they had broken a double bond, had they not simply and sincerely ordered their conversation.

Simplicity] is a terme which sometimes

times notes folly. *How long ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and soales hate knowledge? Prov. I. 22.* In my Text, this tearme is opposed to double-mindednesse, and such men have usually more wit then they use well; and signifies a unity and identity, betweene the heart and tongue; what the tongue saies, the heart really intends: and so taken, it sounds the same with sincerity, and therefore are coupled together here by the Apostle, as *Synonyma's, contermini*, words of the same signification.

Sincerity is either *Morall* or *Theologicall*. Morall sincerity, I call such a qualification of spirit, as leads a man to doe to others, as he would be done to himselfe. A rectitude of spirit in relation to men. Such a sincere man ('tis probable) was *Abimelech* King of *Gerar*. He tooke *Abrahams* wife unto him, she being very beautifull, but this he would not have done, had he knowne her to have beene *Abrahams* wife; for *Abraham* had told him; that she was his sister; and therefore God bore witnessse with *Abimelech* concerning

ning his integrity. *In the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands have I done this*, said Abimelech; and God said unto him, *yea I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart*, Gen. 20. 6. Such a sincere man, was that yong man which came to our Saviour, and told him, that he had kept *all the Commandements from his youth*. He gave to every man his due, and lived orderly amongst his neighbours, and therefore he judged himselfe as good as needed to be.

Morall sincerity, is close hypocrisie. Morall sincerity is like some counterfeit Pearles, which make a faire shew to looke upon, but deceive both buyer and beholder. Multitudes thinke that because their spirits are so over-ruled by God, that they doe no injury to man, that therefore they are endowed with *godly sincerity*, *εὐαγγελία Θεῷ*, the sincerity of God, as the originall here calls it. The truth is, Morall sincerity, is the sincerity of God too; for 'tis his restraining corrupt man, which otherwise would be as prophane towards man outwardly, as he is towards God inwardly.

inwardly. *I withheld thee from sinning against me*, said God to *Abimelech*, Gen. 20.6. A morall sincere man, is but an out-side holy man, but observes it not; and therefore (I think) called by some, a close hypocrit. But this is not that sincerity of God, which my Text speaks of.

Godly sincerity, or, the sincerity of God, which my Text speakes of, is a speciall work of God upon the soule of man, making him laborious, to walke according to Gods Will in all things, that God may have all the glory due to his Name.

First, I say, that godly sincerity is a speciall worke of God upon the soule, &c. This Genus, the Apostle confirms in my text, calling sincerity *ἡλικενία Θεοῦ*, the sincerity of God. That is, that sincerity, which is after a speciall manner wrought of God, in the heart of man. So likewise else-where the Apostle solemnly praies for sincerity, in the behalfe of the *Philippians*; which plainly shewes, that sincerity is not *Quid proveniens a natura*, a thing growing naturally in man. And this I pray (saith the Apostle) that your love may abound, that

Genus in
Definitione.

that you may approve the things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere, and without offence unto the day of Christ. Phil. 1. 9, 10.

The heart of man naturally is *deceitfull*, not sincere; *deperately wicked*, not truly good; more opposite to sincerity then to any thing; as things corrupted, carry a greater dissimilitude to what they were, then to any thing else which they never were. The Divell is more opposite to the goodness of an Angell which once he had, then to any lower good, which he never formally had; which is a torment that lyes upon him, as a part of his judgement. *God made man upright*: that is, for qualification suitable to his owne will; apt and able to walke in all holy waies blamelesse. Man voluntarily loosing this, as the Divell did that, through pride, is with the Divell, more dislike to himselfe; then to any thing below himselfe: he is more like a Lyon, a Leopard, a Tyger, a Beare, a Wolfe, a Serpent, a Toad, a Stocke, a Stone, then man in innocency; and more violently opposite to uprightness

ness and justice naturally, then any creature below him is: and therefore is the heart of man naturally said to be deceitfull [*above all things*] and desperately wicked [*beyond knowledge*] *Ier.* 17.9. which is enough to demonstrate, that godly sincerity cannot be a *natura*; and if not of nature, then of grace. There is no fallacy in this disjunctive argument.

Making a man laborious, &c. that is, constantly laborious, willingly laborious, and laborious according to *all his strength*. First, sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man *laborious* to doe the Will of God. *Salomon* confirms this where he saith, *That the labour of the righteous tendeth to life*: that is, to a holy and happy life. A sincere man is laborious to lead a holy life, to order all his conversation, according to the holy rule of Gods Word. That thus this clause is to be interpreted, I collect from the following clause, which by way of *antithesis*, the Wise man delivers. *The fruit of the wicked to sinne.* The whole proverb put

Causas accidentium, in definitione.

Prov. 10. 16.

put together, hath the force of a comparison in it. As the labour of the wicked tends to sinne; so the labour of the righteous tends to holinesse, and so consequently to happinesse. Sincerity hath more in it, then an applauding of holinesse: *Thou art more righteous then I: Thy going in and out before me in the host is good.* Sincerity hath more in it then a lasie wishing for holinesse. *O that I might die the death of the righteous, and that my last end might be like his!* Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it sets a man a labouring for holinesse. *Wherefore we labour,* that is, we which are sincere, *that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.* 2 Cor. 5. 9. that is, that we may live holily, and die happily; whereas all other men labour after vanities, and so consequently their labours tend to sinne, and so to death, as *Salomon* saith.

Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man see a transcendant worth in the will of God; and worth begets love,

as the Sunne drawes forth the spring; and love begets labour, to attaine the thing beloved. *Thy testimonies are wonderfull: therefore doth my soule keepe them, Psal. 119. 129. Thy testimonies are wonderfull: that is, wonderfull righteous, just, and equall; and wonderfull sweet; sweeter then the honey, or the honey-combe: therefore doth my soule keepe them.* That is, therefore doth my soule labour to keepe them. As if he had said, I see such a transcendent purity, and taste, such a transcendent sweetnesse, in the testimonies of God, that my soule cannot choose, but labour to walke in them.

Sincerity makes a man [*laborious*] to doe the Will of God, you see: that is, it makes a man *constantly, willingly, and according to all his strength*, industrious. That sincerity is such a special worke of God upon the soule, that makes a man [*constantly*] laborious to doe the Will of God, *Paul* in whom sincerity was, confirms. *And herein doe I exercise my selfe, to have [alwaies] a conscience void of offence, towards God and towards man, Acts 24. 16. Pauls industry*

dustry was , to obey the Will of God to day, and the like next day , and so he continued laborious every day, that he might have [*alwaies*] a conscience void of offence, towards God & man. The high way of the upright, is to depart from evill, saith Solomon, Prov. 16.v.17. That is, this is their daily soule labour, the continuall road in which they travell, to get rid of sinne, and to depart from that more and more. An hypocrite stumbles into this path of piety now & then, but this is not his high way, his usuall and daily road; he quickly gets out of it againe: to this unconstant cloud, (I conceive) *Salomon* opposeth the upright man, in the place fore-cited, who makes it a beaten high way, he is so constant in his endeavours to doe good, and to depart from evill, *I have enclined my heart, to performe thy statutes [alway] [even unto the end.] Psal. 119.112.* Sincerity, is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it inclines the heart to labour *alwaies*, to obey the Will of God, which naturally is quickly weary of wel-doing. As the touch of a Loadstone, makes the needle to

to have a constant and restless inclination to the North: so godly sincerity, which I may call Gods secret touch of the heart, it makes the soule of man, have a constant and restless inclination, to walke in Gods waies; & this constant inclination makes him constantly laborious, to doe according to his daily desire. Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man to set God [alwaies] before him, and to doe all things daily as in his presence. *I have set the Lord [alwaies] before me, saith David, Psal. 16. 8. For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, [in the sight of God] speake we in Christ, 2 Cor. 2. 17.* This is the genuine nature of sincerity, to make a man to set God [alwaies] before his eyes, and to doe things, as *beholding him that is invisible*

Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man so constant in his endeavours to do the Will of God, that no opposition can make him to cease this labour. *The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet*

have I not declined from thy Law, Psal. 119. 51. Proud wretches scoff'd at holy waies, and *David's* holy endeavours to walke in them: nay, they did this *vehemently*; and yet *David* (being sincere) held on his holy course still. Nay, else-where he tels us, that they had *almost consumed him upon earth*, such was their malice against him, and yet he forsooke not his holy industry to obey Gods precepts, *Psal. 119. 87.* Neither persecution of tongue nor hand, though never so vehement, can make a man, in whose heart godly sincerity is, to cease his industry to obey God, and walke in his waies. Hang him up as a bottle in the smoke, and yet he will not forget this worke he is about, to wit, to obey Gods statutes. Strong trials may make a sincere heart give backe for a time, so farre may they prevaile upon the remaining unsoundnesse, that is in the heart of man naturally when at best; but they never prevaile, to make a sincere heart give off his labour to obey God.

Psal. 119. 83

That sincerity is such a speciall worke

worke of God upon the soule, as makes a man *willingly laborious* to doe the Will of God, is hinted to us by that expreffion of the Prophet, *Isai. I. 19. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land.* Sincere men, are such as shall eat the good of that holy Land, which *Canaan* typified: So that this being laid downe, as an undeniable conclusion; we see that sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, as toucheth the will, and so makes a man not onely obedient, but *willing and obedient*, without which there is no *eating*, that is, enjoying of that holy Land, which *Canaan* typified. 'Twas that which God did much looke at, and stand upon, under the old covenant, that in all their sacrificall services (which were of cost and charge) they should be willing and chearfull, or else God would not account their obedience sincere, and therefore saith *David* an upright man, and that God and all his people might see his uprightness, in this chargeable way of serving God, *I will [freely] sacrifice unto thee, I will* praise

praise thy Name, O Lord, for it is good. I will freely sacrifice: that is, willingly, chearfully, bountifully, &c. If willingness were so much lookt at, in their chargeable services under the old covenant, as a symptome of sincerity, much more doubtlesse doth God looke at it now, in his services of the new covenant, which are without expence; and answerably doubtlesse is it with sincere men for the generall, under the Gospell: to wit, more willing and chearfull in their services to God, then they under the Law were.

A sincere man doth not labour to serve God, of constraint, and by compulsion, as some servants, & all beasts, serve us: but of a ready minde, as one that hath chosen this way of life above all others, to walke in: *I have chosen the way of truth; thy judgements have I laid before me. Psal. 119. 30.* Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man see a greater beauty in Gods waies, then in any waies beside; and to taste a greater sweetnesse in these waies, then in any waies; and hence the soule is raised

fed, voluntarily and freely, to *choose* these waies to walke in, before all others. Sincerity is such a speciall work of God upon the soule, that it makes a man see the Word of God to be the straightest and truest rule of all others, to walke by ; and therefore voluntarily chooseth this, before others, to lay before him, as a rule to walke by. *I have chosen the way [of truth:] thy judgements have I laid before me.*

That sincerity is such a speciall Workē of God upon the soule, as makes a man laborious [*according to all his strength*] to doe the Will of God, we may lively see by some notable expressions of Paul. *I presse towards the marke, for the price of the high Calling, of God, in Christ Jesus, Phil. 3. 14.* *διώκων ἄσπετον*, *I pursue, I hunt*, saith the originall. Pursuing and hunting are actions wherein the creature puts forth all his strength, to get what they desire. Sincerity sets a man to hit the white; and there must be all possible care in levelling, to doe this. Sincerity sets the soule to winne the prise; (*for the price of the high calling*) now a man that

would win the prise, must not runne
 lasily, but he must *nervis cunctis labo-*
rare, runne with all his strength. So
 you have another notable expression,
Phil. 3. 13. Forgetting those things which
are behind, and [reaching forth] unto
those things which are before, ἐπεκτεινόμενος
extending, contending, stretching forth,
reaching forth; which are all termes
(you know) which note the whole
strength put forth, to acquire a thing.
 Sincerity is such a speciall worke of
 God upon the soule, as makes a man
 to set before him no other rule, but
 perfection, to walke by; and then it
 makes a man labour with all his
 strength, to walke exactly according
 to this rule; *ἐν τούτοις* *If by any meanes he*
may attaine unto the resurrection of the
dead. That is, to doe the Will of God
 on earth, as men risen from the dead,
 and living with Christ in heaven doe.
 Hitherto tend also those expressions
 in Scripture, of serving God with the
 [whole heart] *with my whole heart have I*
sought thee, O let me not wander from thy
Commandements. Psal. 119. 10. I labour
with all my strength to walke in thy
 waies

waies, and when I have put forth mine owne strength to the uttermost, then I deny all in my selfe, and wholly depend upon thy strength, to be made victorious, against the many temptations I meet withall; And whilst through thine aid, I goe in the direct way, to obtaine grace, and victory against corruptions, let me not O Lord be frustrated, and so lie open still, to be drawne aside from thy Commandements.

Godly sincerity makes a man observe the divine rule, in labouring to doe the will of God. Now the divine rule in this point, is, that we should labour with *all our strength*. *Thou hast commanded us to keepe thy precepts [diligently] psal. 119. 4. Thou hast commanded us to keepe* that is, thou hast commanded us to labour to keepe: but how to labour? lasily? no: *diligently*. *בְּכָל־כֹּחְךָ* *valdè, very much, earnestly, vehemently*, saith the originall. That is, with all our strength. Now sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man put this precept before him, in all his labourings

rings to doe the will of God : and so he labours *very much, earnestly, vehemently*, that is, with all his strength, to doe the Will of God.

Iob 2.3.

That sincerity makes a man laborious with all his might [*to doe all Gods will*] the Scripture abundantly proveth. God himselfe describing a sincere man, to the Divell, confirmeth this. *And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou not considered my servant Iob, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evill?* That is, one that eyeth all my will, and escheweth all that is contrary thereunto. That thus these words are to be interpreted is manifest by *Iobs* owne language, when he would maintaine his sincerity to God, the searcher of all hearts. *Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity.* Why, what is thy integrity *Iob*, upon which thou dost so much stand? Why 'tis this : I have laboured to obey *all Gods will*. *If my steps have turned out of the way, and my heart walked after mine eyes, and if [any blot] hath cleaved to my hand,*

hand, &c. *Iob 31.* If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hastened to deceit; and so he goes on largely; driving things to this issue, that if he had not been laborious, to walke according to all Gods will, he would yeeld to what his adversaries charged him with, to wit, that his heart was not sincere. So likewise the Lord explaines himselfe, in describing *Dauids* integrity to *Salomon*. And if thou walke before me as *David thy Father*, in integrity of heart, and in uprightnesse, to doe according to [all] that I have commanded thee, *1 King. 9. 4.* By this we plainly see, that sincerity, sets a man to doe all that God enjoynes. Christ therefore in the new Testament, describing sincerity to the yong man that thought himselfe as upright (doubtlesse) as any, *All these things have I kept from my youth: what lacke I yet?* Jesus said unto him, *If thou wilt be perfect:* that is, if thou wilt be sincere and upright indeed, in the eye of God who is a searcher of the heart, *goe and sell all thou hast, and give to the poore, and come and follow me:* Part with every lust, with covetousnesse thy

thy darling sinne, as well as with others, to which thy nature is not so apt, and resigne up thy heart, to obey me in all things, so shalt thou be happy here and hereafter. Sincerity makes a man set all Gods will before him, as a rule to walke by, and to obey God in that part of his will that most opposeth that sinne, to which he is most enclined, as well as any other. *For all his judgments were before me; and I did not put away his statutes from me. I was upright before him, and kept my selfe from [mine iniquity].* Psal. 118. 22. 23. *I did not put away his Statutes from me, &c.* An unsound soule will not take notice of such a precept, as opposeth his speciall sinne: such a precept must goe for a blanke, which the soule throwes by, and will not thinke of, but as conscience now and then puts him in minde of it, whether he will or no. But 'tis not so with a man in whom sincerity is: that precept which doth most oppose that sinne, to which he is most inclin'd, he labours to obey as well as any other. *I was upright before thee, and I kept my selfe from [mine iniquity.]*

An

An unsound soule sets so many of Gods statutes before him, as rules to walke by, as suites with himselfe and the times, and no more. Such precepts as oppose his speciall corruptions, or displease the times, and so expose him to suffering, these he baukes and *puts away*, as *David* here saith, and calls them as the rotten Scribes and Pharises were wont to doe, *Least Commandements*, small things not to be regarded: which rottenesse Christ tooke up roundly in those ironicall words, *Whosoever shall breake one of these least Commandements, shall be called the least in the Kingdom of God.* Godly sincerity makes no difference of greatest and least, betweene the precepts of God, but sets all before a man as a rule to walke by, and makes the soule laborious to observe all. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy Commandements.* Psal. 119. 6.

That God may have all the glory due to his Name] That sincerity makes a man to aime at the glory of God, and not at his owne glory, is manifest by that expref-

expression the Apostle useth in my Text, *not with fleshly wisdom*, that is, not declaring our owne humane parts and gifts, to advance our owne honour and esteeme, but as the spirit gave us utterance, so we speak in all plainnesse & sincerenesse, that so poore ignorant soules might be edified, and God glorified. Christ describing an upright man to the unsound Scribes and Pharisees, describes him (I remember) by this property, *That he seekes not his owne glory: but his glory that sent him.* He that speaketh of himselfe seeketh his owne glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is [true,] and no unrighteousnesse in him, Iohn 7. 18. Christ that had no guile found in his lips, vindicated his sincerity still by this, that he sought not his own glory in any thing he did, but the glory of him that sent him: and that man which doth thus, *he is true, and there is no unrighteousnesse in him.* That is, he is sincere, and no hypocrit as the world may falsly judge. As Aristotle said of a friend, that he is, *alter ego, another I, or another selfe*: so may I say of a Christian, that he is *alter Christus*

Christus, another Christ: *as he is, so are we in this world*, saith Saint Iohn. As he aimed in all things at the glory of his father; so a sincere man aims in eating, in drinking, or whatsoever he does, at the glory of God. *God forbid* (saith Saint Paul) *that I should glory in any thing but in Christ*. Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man give Christ all the glory, of all the good he does, and of all the good he has, and hopes for; and to appropriate nothing to himselfe but shame, *yet am I nothing*, saith Paul. Nothing but a sinner; nay, of all sinners the chiefe.

An upright man, *is a man after Gods owne heart*: now looke what God most lookes for, that an upright man lookes most at, and labours most of all to helpe God unto. Now God looks at his owne honour and glory in every thing, wherein he hath to doe with the creature, above any thing. He made all things for his glory; and upholds all things for his glory. There should never have beene a stone laid, in the glorious Fabricke of this world,
had

had it not beene for Gods glory : nor not a stone should have beene left upon a stone, long ere this, but the whole world should have beene turned into his first nothing, were it not for Gods glory. This a sincere man eyes, and answerably applies himselfe to God in all he does; as an obedient wife applies her selfe to that sweet carriage, that she knowes will most delight her husband. When *Isaac* had discovered to *Esau*, that Venison was the most savory meat, which his soule desired, *Esau* applied himselfe to his father, and goes a hunting after it; that he might bring to his father what he most loved, and so obtaine his fathers blessing. Now God hath declared that his honour and glory is that savorie meat which his soule of all things, most loves; and therefore all that are sincere children of God, they doe hunt and plot for this, in all their waies that they may bring God that savorie meate, which his soule most loves.

The description of sincerity being thus opened, I am in the next place to shew unto you, the grounds of the
point

point; why we ought thus simply and sincerely, to have our conversation in this world. The grounds are these foure: First, because God commands it. Secondly, because God delights in it. Thirdly, because God hath appointed this and no other way unto all good. Lastly, because the world which lies in wickednesse, may be left without excuse. First, we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in the world, because God commands it. *I am the Almighty God, walke before me, and be thou perfect;* that is, *entire, sincere, Gen. 17. 1.* This Commandement God gave to *Abraham*, and in him to all us. This commandement is not grievous; a Commandement that hath any injustice in it, that any should complaine or except against it, and therefore ought to be obeyed. For God made man, and can unmake him againe at his pleasure; and therefore may justly serve himselfe of him, and appoint him what rules he pleaseth to walke by. *I am God Almighty]* *walke before me and be sincere. I by my Almighty power*
D made

made thee of nothing, and can quickly by this Almighty power, turne thee into worse then nothing : therefore walke thus and thus as I command thee.

God did more by his Almighty power, then barely make man : God by his Almighty power made man upright : that is, not as uprightness notes sincerity, but as uprightness notes perfection. And therefore God might justly command us (if he would) to walke perfectly, as Angels and Saints in Heaven doe. This Commandement therefore is not grievous, but full of mercy and moderation, that he commands us only to walke before him and be upright, as uprightness notes sincerity. Therefore seeing 'tis a Commandement full of justice and mercy both, it ought to be obeyed : and so consequently, every one of us ought in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in this world.

Secondly, as God commands us to be sincere, so he *delights* in it ; and therefore we ought in simplicity and
godly

godly sincerity, to have our conversation in this World. *They that are of a froward heart, are an abomination to the Lord; but such as are upright in their way, are his delight. Prov. 11. 20.* Kings, as they have officers for necessity, so they have favorites, persons of honour for communion and delight. Now the King of Kings, would have no fit persons of honour, for communion and delight in this world, were there no upright men, in it: and therefore we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in this world. God would live solitary and alone in this world, without any pleasure or delight in this world, were there no upright men, nor uprightness in it: for God hath no pleasure in wickedness nor wicked men. *Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, Psal. 5. 4.* The God of this world, that rules in the children of disobedience, is a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; but the God of all the world, is not such a God; he hath pleasure only in uprightness. *I know also my God, that thou triest the* D 2 *heart,*

heart, and hast pleasure in uprightnesse. 1 Chro. 29. 17. And therefore we ought to walke in uprightnesse, or else we shall deprive the King of Kings, of his pleasure.

Thirdly, we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in this world, because God hath appointed this and no other way to all good. *For the Lord God is a Sunne and a Shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold, from them that walke uprightly.* Psal. 84. 11. If we would have the sight of Gods smiling countenance, to shine upon our soules, which is ten thousand times more glorious, and reviving then the Sunne, we must walke uprightly: for the Lord God is a *Sunne* to such, and to none else. *God is angry with the wicked every day,* saith the Prophet: and being angry with them every day, he cannot smile upon their soules, as the Sunne doth upon all creatures, but frowne and knit the browes against them. God dwels as a convincer and reprover, and not as a comforter, in the hearts of hypocrits. God feeds
ment

mens soules with gall and worme-wood, with bitters, not with sweets; with *a certaine fearesfull looking for of judgement, and fiery indignation*, which have not their conversation in simplicity and godly sincerity, in this world A Hell and not a Heaven, shall men that walke not uprightly, have within their owne hearts.

If we would have protection, we must walke uprightly: for the Lord God is a *Shield* onely to such. *He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly, his place of defence shall be the munitions of Rocks, Isa. 33. 15.* God is a consuming fire, and not a defence unto the hypocrit. In a word, if a man would have grace or glory, or any good thing else that he can name, he must walke in this way to obtaine it, to wit, *in simplicity and godly sincerity*: for in no other way hath God engaged himselfe, to bestow any good upon man, but all evill. The Israelites going out on the Sabbath day to finde Manna, found nothing but a curse; and the reason, because out of Gods way. God will distribute blessings in his owne way:

if we decline this way, God will inflict curses, and not blessings. Now upright walking is that way, in which God hath promised to bestow all good, and none else : and therefore we ought thus to walke. 'Tis fit we should come to God, and not God to us : 'tis fit that unholy man should conforme to a holy God ; and not a holy God, to unholy man.

I Finally, we ought *in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in the World*, that so the world which lies in wickednesse, may be left without excuse, both in regard of their wickednesse towards God, and his children. Wicked men complaine of Christ, that he is a hard master, looking to reape where he did not sow ; that this and that precept is a hard saying, none can obey it. And others complaine that the world is so full of occasions and provocations, that 'tis impossible to walke uprightly. Others, that times are so hard and dead, that they cannot live of their callings, if they should deale justly, and walke uprightly. Now Christ will stop the
mouthes

mouthes of all these at the great day, by setting before them those that have lived, in the same ages of the world, in the same employments in the world, under the same government of Christ in the world, and yet have kept themselves unspotted of the world, and have in simplicity and godly sincerity, had their conversation in the world: and then shall Christ *be cleare when he judges*, and liars mouthes shall be stopt, and be like the man that wanted a wedding garment. And therefore we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity to have our conversation in the world, every one in his place, that so Christ may doe this service by us against the wicked, at the great day.

Againe, that wicked men may be left without excuse, as in regard of their wickednesse towards God, so in regard of their wickednesse towards Gods children. Now the wicked persecute the godly with tongue and hand, and pretend just ground for their practice; that the godly are, as he falsely said of the Prophet, troublers of *Israel*; enemies to Church and State. But at

the great day, the searcher of all hearts will lay open all things according to truth; and make it plainly appeare to men and Angels, that they had their conversation in this world, in simplicity and godly sincerity, and so guiltlesse of all, that the wicked accused them of, and punished them for; and then will Christ be cleare when he judges these wretches, for condemning the generation of the just. Wherefore we ought to walke sincerely and blamelessely in this world, that so the wicked may have no plea, for their wicked proceedings against us, or against the righteous proceeding of Christ, against them.

Ought we *in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in the world?* Why, then let us examine ourselves, and see whether we thus walke. Are ye *laborious*? that is, *constantly laborious, willingly laborious; laborious according to all your strength, to doe all Gods will, that he may have all the glory due to his Name?* Looke backe, and call to minde, how this description of sincerity was opened, and lay
open

open your hearts and lives by it, and see whether they agree or not. Are ye *laborious* to doe the will of God? Or doe ye not the *worke of the Lord negligently*? and so stand lyable to that dreadfull curse denounced by *Ieremy*? Doe ye not rest in bodily exercises, which profit nothing? 'Tis the least labour in the world, to bring the outward man to duties; the labour of labours is about the heart, to bring that to duties; are ye laborious about this? Are ye watchfull over your Spirits, and laborious about your inward man, that this in every thing, may goe along with the outward man to obey God. 'Twas that the Lord of old upbraided his people withall, that they were laborious according to the outward man, to come to Church, and to be at all divine exercises, but they were carelesse respecting their hearts, which God most lookt at, and let this runne loose after vanity. *And they come unto thee, as thy people commeth, and they sit before thee as thy people, and they heare thy words, but they will not doe them: for with their mouthes they shew much love, but*

Ier. 43. 10.

but their heart goeth after their covetousnesse, Ezek. 33. 31. God most lookes at the heart, how that is entire to, or loose from, himselfe. Are ye most laborious about that, which God most lookes at? or doe ye not least minde that which God lookes at most? In this consists the power of godlinesse, to be laborious about the inward man, to bring this to be obedient to the will of God (*My Sonne, give me thy heart.*) Neglect this, and thou wert as good sit still, as labour at all about thy outward man, to bring that to be holy: thy labour about outside holinesse, is to God as the cutting off of a dogs necke: and God will upbraid thy labour, as he did those hypocriticall Scribes and Pharisees, who washed the out-side of the Cup and Platter.

Possibly some of you may thinke, that you hold weight well enough by this: That you are *laborious* according to the outward man, and according to the inward man, to doe the will of God: but put in one weight more into the Scales and Ballance of the sanctuary,

ctuary, to wit, this; Are ye *constantly* laborious to doe the will of God? Tell me which way the Scales turne now. Sincerity makes a man *constantly* laborious to doe the will of God, as you have largely heard; doe you thus labour? Or are ye not quickly weary in wel-doing; so weary as to leave off the worke? Thou art watchfull over thy spirit to day; but art thou not as carelesse about it to morrow? The godly are subject to wearisomenesse, and *fainting in their minds* (as the Apostle intimates) in their labouring about, and watching with an unruly heart; but they are never so weary, as to give over the worke. *David* was wearied often with his *groanings*, they were so deepe, and breathed out so many precious Spirits; but yet as fresh strength came, he kept on groaning still, under the heavie burthen of a bad heart, and never left labouring about his spirit, to bring it to be more and more composed, entire, and one with God as long as he lived. But unsound Christians, are quickly weary in labouring about their hearts, just in that

that sense, which God is said to be weary of repenting, *Ier. 15. 6. Thou hast forsaken me* (saith the Lord) *thou art gone backward ; therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, I am weary of repenting.* That is, I will repent no more : I will forbear the execution of my threatnings no longer. So rotten hearts are wearied with repenting, soule searching, and soule watching, that they will repent no more, nor maintaine inward industry about their soules no more ; but judge of it upon a little triall, as that which will shorten their lives, or at least, utterly end the felicity of their lives, and at last cry it downe, as an unnecessary and unreasonable service. Is it not thus with you ?

Possibly yet some of you may think, that you hold weight well enough, by the Ballance of the Sanctuary. But put in one weight more, and tell me which way the scales turne then. Are ye *willingly and cheerefully laborious*, to doe the will of God ? Doe you finde any soule sweetnesse, in your soule labours ? Or are they not as the disease
of

of the stone, strong tortures, without the least tang of sweetnesse? Is it not as death unto thee, to be searching, humbling, watching and observing thy spirit, a day? Doeſt thou not shunne and avoid occasions, as much as thou canst, that may make thee to looke in upon thy spirit, to checke it in its vaine way, as that which is like the pricking of thy *right eye*? Doeſt thou not make frivolous excuses, and needlesse businesse, to put by *Dauids* opportunities, of private commerce with God and thine owne soule? as one that findeth no pleasure nor profit, in this service of God? Doeſt thou not wish that Prayers were over, Sermons over, the Lords day over, that thou mightest be selling Corne, and following thy secular employments, and carnall sports and delights, as those wherein thou findest more soule content, then in any divine thing. *'Tis a joy to the just to doe judgement*, saith *Solomon*. Tis the sweetest pleasure in the world to an upright man, to be in upright holy waies, doing uprightly to God
and

and man. Gods word, Gods ordinances, Gods people, Gods service in every part thereof, are all transcendently sweet to an upright soule: *Sweeter then honey*, that is, sweeter then the sweetest earthly content. And the more spirituall divine duties and exercises are, the more pleasing and taking still, to an upright soule. Duties of most seriousness and strictness, are of most soule sweetness to him Is it thus with you?

Possibly yet some of you may thinke that you hold weight well enough, by this Ballance of the Sanctuary. But put in one graine more, and tell me whether thou be not found too light then? Are ye laborious *according to all your strength*, to doe the will of God? Doe you *reach forth and presse forward*, as Saint Paul saith? that is, put out all your strength to obey the will of God? this in Scripture, where sincerity is pressed unto, is called a serving of God with *all our hearts*. You take a little pains to obey the will of God, but could you not take a great deale more if you listed? 'Twas the unsoundness of
of

of the Jewes, that when they could have brought Males and legitimate sacrifices, they brought (to save their purses) maimed and deformed sacrifices. And so 'twas the unsoundnesse of *Saul*, that he could have killed *Agag* and the fat of the Cattell, as well as the rest of the Amalekites, if he would. And is it not your hypocrisie, that you could doe a great deale more to please God, then you doe, if you listed? Doe not by and selfe ends make you pluck in your hornes, and suspend your selves, parts and abilities from Gods service? Doth not the feare of the losse of your liberties, livings, lives, and the like, make you speake lesse for God, and doe lesse for God, then he hath given you ability and opportunity to doe? Doe ye not put forth your parts in the service of God, in reference to the safety of your skin, and not in reference to Gods command, which calls for all our might, in his service?

If you tell me that you hold weight yet by the ballance of the sanctuary, why put in yet one graine more, and tell

tell me whether the scales do not stand without poising either way? Are ye laborious according to all your strength, to doe all Gods will? according to that holy rule, *Dent. 15. 5.* *Onely if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to doe [all these Commandements] which I command thee this day.* You doe with *Herod*, by meanes of powerfull preaching, and sharpe affliction, reforme many things peradventure, but doe ye labour to reforme all things? To divorce your selves from your *Herodias*? To pull out right eyes, and to cut off right hands? To mortifie your *members which are upon earth*; that is, the sinnes of your soules, which are as deare unto you as the members of your bodies? or doe ye not spare *Agag*, and the fat of your lusts? pleasing sinnes, and profitable sinnes? Doe you observe doctrine and discipline, matter and manner in the worship and service of God?

You pray, but doe ye pray *seruently*? You pray, but doe ye *watch and pray*? You heare the word of God, but doe ye *take heed how ye heare*? You receive the

the Sacrament, but doe ye *examine yourselves and so eate*? You goe to the house of God about holy duties, but do ye *look to your sect*, when you approach so neere unto God? you give to the poore, but do you give *cheerfully*? You give, but do you give liberally? You know the Scripture calls for manner, as well as matter: manner is all in all with God. And sincerity is such a speciall work of God upon the soule, that it makes a man laberious to doe every divine thing exact, according to that divine manner, which God in his word prescribes. 'Tis not thus with an hypocrite: he is lead by customes; and makes it a matter of conscience, not to swerve from these, how incongruous so ever to the word of God; Or else he is fearefully given over to a careless Spirit, to doe divine things as hits, he cares not how; any way, or no way, all is one. Or else, he is desperatly pinned to his owne will, being wiser in his owne eyes then ten men that give a reason. Thus & thus he will walke, say all the world what they will: is it not thus with you?

If you tell me that yet you hold out weight by the ballance of the sanctuaries, I am glad; yet possibly you may

E

he

be one graine too light. Are ye labourious to doe all Gods will, *that God may have all the glory due to his name?* Do ye not sacrifice to your owne ners, and take the glory to your selves of your labours like *Herod*? When men applaud you, is not this to you, as the rubbing of a Parrat upon the head, very pleasing, and that which makes you hugge your selves within your owne thoughts: *Is not this great Babell which I have built?* Could such a thing have beene done, if I had not done it? Or could any man have done it so well as I? Looke in upon your spirits before, but specially after divine duties, and see whether you doe not seeke your selves in them, more then the glory of Christ. Doe ye not give almes to be accounted liberall men, and that the poore may applaud you for good men, and good house-keepers? Doe ye not *blow a Trumpet, when you give almes?* that is, so distribute your charity, as may be most advantagious to your owne repute in the world? Do ye not let your left hand know still what your right hand doth? Are ye not
dampnt

damp't in your designs of charity and bounty, when 'tis to goe forth in such a way, as if it were *cast upon waters*, or into the bottome of a Well, where no eye can see, nor no tongue speake of your good workes, nor no likely'ud of theleast returne? Doe ye not looke for much observance, from such to whom you doe much? And repent of your kindnesse, when men doe not answer it in thankfulnesse? Doe ye eye Christs command, and out of love to him, give upon all just occasions, as unto him? Are those that are religious tendered and succoured by you, in their bonds and miseries, *as if you were bound with them*, according to the divine rule?

Doe ye not in prayer, more looke at words and expressions, then to your spirits? Doe ye not *pray in the market-places*? That is, so pray that others may observe you, and blaze abroad that you are very devout persons? Are ye not industrious to pray well (as you call it) in publike, and carelesse and perfunctory, when you pray in private? Are ye not more constant a great

deale, in the performance of publike, then in the performance of private prayers, where there is no observer nor applauder but God, which sees and heares in secret? Doe ye not after prayer, hug your owne gifts, and admire your apt expressions, dexterity of utterance; and to thinke much, that you have no more thanks given you for your paines; and that those that joyned with you, were no more affected? Doe ye not pin your spirits to your owne acute studied formes, and praiers in print, *boasting of things made ready to your hand*, (as the Apostle speakes) and scoffe at the *spirit of grace and supplication*, Zech. 12.10.

Doe ye not preach your selves and not Christ; and more looke at words then matter; to please men, then to please God? Doe ye labour to approve your selves to every mans conscience, or to every mans fancie? Doe ye not put plaine truths, into abstruse termes, a new coat upon old divinitie, and strive to soare in drie Metaphysicall straines, above your owne and others apprehension? Doe ye not *build hay*
and

and stubble, upon the true foundation? the opinions of Fathers and Schoolemen, and the tenents of proud time-servers, whom God hath given over to a *Spirit of delusion to believe lies*, because they received not the truth in the love of it? Doe ye aime at conviction, conversion, or ostentation in your preaching? Doth it not almost make you sicke like *Ahab*, that your elaborate Sermons in places of eminent note, have not yet brought you to a fat living? Doe ye not preach *Christ out of envie*, as the Apostle speakes, to bring about your wicked designs, and to vend your malicious spirits against the godly? Doe ye not wrest the word of Christ, to confirme your time-serving tenents, & to maintaine your voluptuous loitering life? And if so: is this *in simplicity and godly sincerity to have your conversation in the world*?

To you that by what hath beene said, see, that you are yet unsound at heart, that you doe not in simplicity and godly sincerity, order your conversation in this world, I have three

things to say : Labour to be affected with your unsoundnesse. Then judge your selves, that you may never be judged of the Lord : And then begge the cure of your foule disease.

First, labour to be affected with your unsoundnesse. This is the killing mischief of hypocrisie, that it is hard and difficult, throughly to be found out, and truely to be bewailed. Hypocrisie is *vitium latens*, *vitium transfigurans*, *vitium adularans*, & *vitium obdurans* : a hidden, a transforming, a flattering, and a hardening vice. 'Tis a hidden vice. *The heart is deceitfull, and desperately wicked, who can [know it]* (saith the Prophet.) *The spirit of a man may know the things of a man* ; but deceit and guile, this lurkes and skulkes in such hidden corners of the heart, that the spirit of man does not know it. And hence it is, that multitudes thinke themselves very sincere, which yet are very unsound. A man may discern drunkennesse, swearing, and whoring in himselfe, and yet all this while, be utterly unable to see the hypocrisie of his spirit : and hence 'tis, that

that you shall have drunkards, swea-
 rers, and whore-masters to confesse
 these vices, and yet plead for the
 goodnesse of their hearts and mea-
 nings too.

When the unsoundnesse of the
 heart, is discovered by the word and
 spirit of God, then hypocrisie becomes
vitium transfigurans, a transforming
 vice. The heart strives now, to put
 faire glosses upon foule matters; to
 put a beautifull vizzard, upon the
 ugly face of sinne; and to appeare in
 the eye of awakened conscience, quite
 of another colour; or at least nothing
 so ugly, as the word of God would
 make it to be.

If this will not stop the mouth of
 complaining conscience, then it be-
 comes *vitium adulans*, a flattering vice.
 The heart tells conscience now, that
 'tis true, things are bad, but God is very
 good: he is not *extreame to marke*
what is done amisse; a thousand worse
 persons have found mercy, and are
 gone to Heaven, and therefore thou
 needst not so much trouble thy selfe
 O my soule. *He that beleeves makes not*

hast; 'tis time enough yet, to amend all that is amisse, and to be as good as the best.

4

All this while that it is a *hidden vice*, a *transforming vice*, a *flattering vice*, 'tis a *hardning vice*. All the while hypocrisie lies hid, and after it is discovered, and shifts and flatters, it insensibly hardens; so that whilst *deceiving*, the soule is miserably deceived, and then becomes *past feeling*, conscience being *seared with an hot iron*: that is, God utterly leaving conscience, to doe any office any longer for him, in checking such a shifting shuffling sinner, in his sinfull way. And when this worke is done upon any soule, you may leave tolling, and ring out; for he is dead and gone for ever.

Now because hypocrisie is of such a shuffling subtile nature as this, 'tis very hard for a man to become truely sensible of it, and throughly affected with it: and therefore I exhort you, which are convinced by what was formerly delivered, of your unsoundnesse, first to labour to be truely sensible of it, and deeply affected with it.

Tis

'Tis a vice that of all vices, puts you into the furthest unlikenesse to God, and the neereſt likenesse to the divell. It puts you into the furthest diſſimilitude to God, of all vices: for God is *moſt upright*, ſaith *Iſaiah*. Thou [*moſt upright*] *doeſt weigh the path of the juſt*. *Iſai. 26. 7.* God is *moſt upright*, and an hypocrit of all men leaſt upright: and therefore, an hypocrite of all men, is leaſt like God, and yet moſt like the divell; of whom I may ſay, as the Lord of the Leviathan, *He is King*, ſaith God, *of all the children of pride*: So is the divell, King of all the children of hypocrisie. As 'tis ſaid of God, that he is *moſt upright*; ſo it may be ſaid of the divell, that he is moſt guilefull; an arch hypocrit: and therefore guilefull perſons are moſt like the divell; and the more guilefull, the more like: and hence is *Elimas*, who was full of *all ſubtilty*, by way of eminencie, called the *child of the divell* by Saint Paul, who knew well how aptly to ſtile hypocrits.

'Tis a vice that turnes man into a divell, and God into fury fiercer then the

the divell: for the divell is but Gods creature, and therefore though his fury be unexpressible by us, yet it is finite in it selfe; but Gods fury against hypocrits is infinite; and therefore you shall finde him spending a whole chapter, in breathing out woes against hypocrits; and therefore hell as the most suitable place, and the greatest torments in hell; as the most suitable thing to an infinit fury, is reserved as a peculiar portion for hypocrits. Were infinitnesse communicable, and by a finite creature susceptible, no lesse then infinite fury, should hypocrits burne in.

When thou hast by such considerations as these, brought thy spirit to be truely affected with thy unsoundnesse, then judge thy selfe for it, that thou maist not be judged of the Lord. Judge thy selfe as one most injurious to Christ and his glory, of all men. Judge thy selfe as a Traitor to the King of Kings: as one that hast craftily conspired, with the divell and thine owne heart, to keepe out Christ from ruling and raigning in thee: as one
that

that hast subtilly betrayed the honour of God, in every action thou hast performed, seeking thy selfe under pretence of seeking him. Judge thy selfe as a cheater, that hast beene cunning to deceive the godly, and thine owne poore soule. Judge thy selfe, as a selfe-soule-murtherer, that hast craftily baffled thine owne conscience, that Gods word might not convert and turne thee, from thine ungodly course, and so save thy precious soule. Judge thy selfe as a *Judas*, that kissest Christ, bowest and cringest to Christ, and yet betrayest and crucifiest Christ. In a word, judge thy selfe as a right hand of the divell, by which he hath done a great deale of mischief: judge thy selfe as a capitall offender, as a sinner of all sinners the chiefe; and then beg pardon.

And intreat God to cure the soule disease of thy heart. Tell him how long this disease hath beene upon thee; and what a loathsome creature 'tath made thee; and what a prime vitall part 'tis fastened upon; and how neere perishing thou art; and how 'tis past the cure

cure of all other Physicians and Surgeons; and that there is but one way with thee speedily, if thou hast not remedy forthwith from him; and that thou hast nothing of thine owne, to satisfie him for the cure of it; but hast a friend Christ, that will pay all. Remember this, to begge him, who *fashioneth all mens hearts alike*, to mend thy bad heart with a new one, according to his promise. Onely a new heart, is an upright heart; and this God hath promised to give, and this thou must urge, and believe, and waite: and this way shalt thou be healed, helped and saved.

To you which upon examination finde, that you do *in simplicity and godly sincerity, order your conversation in this world*, I have onely this to say, you doe no more then you ought, and therefore there is no place for boasting. 'Tis our beauty in Gods eye, to be vile in our owne eyes, what ever our parts and endeavours be. Thy uprightnesse of integrity, comes farre short of that uprightnesse of perfection, in which thou wast created: and therefore when thou
hast

hast done all that thou canst, yet say that thou art an unprofitable servant; a man that comes farre short of what thou shouldst be, and of what once thou wast.

But that which I would rather stand on a little, is this, Thou that walkest sincerely, doest no more then thou oughtst, and therefore goe on. The Apostles exhortation to the *Hebrewes*, shall be mine to you: *Looke diligently least any man faile of the grace of God, least any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Heb. 12. 15.* We have that within us, and that without us, which will corrupt our simplicity, and turne us aside from our sincere conversation, if we doe not watch over our selves. Where simplicity is, hypocrisie is not wholly extirpated; some remainders of this foule evill are in the best heart; and these rootes of bitterness, if you be not still labouring to grub up, they will quickly over-grow sincerity, and all good in the heart.

And as we have that within us, which will quickly seduce us, from that simplicity w^{ch} is in Christ; so we have that with-

without us too, which will do the like, if we be not very watchfull, to wit the divell and his children. The divell is an arch Apostate himselfe, and he labour might and maine, to make all the sons of men, to fall from grace and goodnesse as he hath done; that so every one, may be as neere like himselfe, in sinne and misery, as may be. *He goes about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devoure* (saith the Apostle.) A thousand wiles hath the Divell to corrupt our simplicity; and he is more laborious about this, then about any designe against the soule of man. The divell is not so laborious, to make a breach upon a mans faith or patience, or the like, as upon a mans sincerity: because he knowes that every breach made upon this, is a stab to the heart, which wil kill the soule for ever, if God do not admirably cure it. If labour will accomplish this designe, the divell will not neglect that: *he goes about seeking whom he may devoure.* If terrours and affrightments will accomplish this designe, the Divell *will roare like a Lyon,* against a mans soule, as if he would teare

teare him to pieces, and suddenly throw him into that bottomelesse pit, without all redemption. If flattery will be more prevalent then terrour, to bring about this designe, the divell will *transforme himselfe into an Angell of light*, and promise us *all the Kingdomes of the World*, to winde us about to him.

And as the divell is laborious about this designe, so he hath many Apostate children, such as have *lost that good that they seemed to have*, and these, as their father, being more like their father, then any of all his children beside, labour tooth and naile, not onely passively by example, but actively by promises and threatnings, especially in these last daies, to turne aside soules from simplicity in doctrine and manners; and by their divellish craft have turned away many; so that many have made shipwracke of faith and a good conscience, and are gone in the way of *Balaam* the sonne of *Bosor* that arch hypocrit, studying and labouring to mischieve Gods people, for preferments and honours in the world; *speaking lies*
in

in hypocrisie, having their consciences seared with an hot iron. And therefore 'tis but needfull and seasonable, that I exhort you to looke to your spirits, and take heed of these bitter rootes, that ye be not defiled by them. Remember what God saith by the Prophet Ezekiel. When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness which he hath done, and committeth iniquity, all the righteousness which he hath done, shall not be mentioned, but in his trespass which he hath trespassed, and in his sinne which he hath sinned, in that shall he die. Ezek. 18.

24. And if once you wax weary of well doing, and decline sincere walking, all thy former integrity shall not so much as once be mentioned to thy comfort, but to thy terroure often shall it be by way of upbraiding, mentioned to thy conscience here, and to the aggravation of thy condemnation hereafter, as one that hast tasted of the powers of the world to come, of the sweetnesse of the spirit of grace, and yet after this, hast grieved, opposed, and done despight against it.

Having therefore put your hand to the

the plough, looke not backe: having begun in the spirit, doe not end in the flesh: having begun to order your conversation sincerely and uprightly, so continue unto the death, what ever you undergoe in life. All afflictions for righteousness sake, shall be tollerable, comfortable, and at last augment your crowne. They shall be tollerable when at height: for nothing shall be above your strength: *God is faithfull by whom you are tempted, who will with the temptation shew a way to escape.*

They shall not onely be tollerable, but they shall be also comfortable, when at the very height. *For as the afflictions of Christ abound in you, so shall your consolations abound by Christ* (as the Apostle saith.) The preception of bitters, makes sweets the sweeter.

Finally they shall be profitable, to augment your crowne of glory in the life to come. *Blessed are ye when persecuted for righteousness sake, for great shall be your reward in heaven* (saith Christ.) And this reward shall come quickly, which addes to the worth and excellency

lency of it: Behold I come quickly, and
my reward is with me, wherefore hold that
fast which thou hast, that no man take thy
Crowne. Revel. 3. 11.

Edw. Goodyeare

FINIS.

Edw. Goodyeare



2 COR. I. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the [testimony of our conscience] that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.



THe second proposition now in order to be handled, is this, *That conscience can give testimony, concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie, of a mans conversation.* Pauls conscience gave testimony with him, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, he had behaved himselfe, in preaching and living, in life and doctrine, as a faithfull Minister of Christ ought to

doe. So likewise his conscience bore witness with him, concerning his sincere and holy desires, towards his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh. *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness, and continuall sorrow in my heart; for I could wish my selfe were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh. Rom. 9. 1.* Iobs conscience also gave testimony concerning his integrity. *Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity.* By this and many such like expressions of his, 'tis most plaine, that his conscience could give testimony concerning his conversation, what it was, whether good or bad. *David's* conscience did the like. *Thou O Lord shalt judge the people: judge me O Lord, according to my righteousness, & according to mine integrity that is in me.* A large induction of particulars to this purpose, might easily be made, but I rather take another way, to confirme this point.

The truth of this point (I conceive) will be better confirmed and opened,
by

Psal. 7. 8.

by setting before you what conscience is; and then you will plainly see what conscience can doe, and doth doe, in the soule of man. Conscience is better felt then defined, for ought that I can yet finde, among the learned. *Conscience is a part of the understanding, in all reasonable creatures, determining of their particular actions, either with them or against them, say some. Conscience is a reflection of the soule upon it selfe, say others. Conscience (say I) is a naturall power which the soule of man hath, above all unreasonable creatures, to compare his waies by some rule, and according as his waies agree or disagree with that rule, so answerably to beare witnessse with or against him.*

First, conscience (say I) is a *naturall power, &c.* My meaning is, conscience is an ability, wherewith God indowed the soule of man by creation, as with other gifts and abilities, for his comfort, if he walked well; for his terrour if he walked ill. We may not imagine, that conscience came not into the world, untill after *Adams* fall: this were to suppose *Adams* in Paradise, to

be a man without conscience. Conscience indeed as an accuser and condemner, came not into the world, untill after *Adams* fall; but conscience as an accuser, acquiter, and comforter, was in *Adam* before his fall. As long as *Adam* obeyed the commandment of God, there was no cause that conscience should accuse him, but as soone as he disobeyed Gods commandment, conscience flew in his face, as appears by his flying from the face of God. Which plainly shewes us this truth, that conscience was in *Adam* before his fall, but did not begin to accuse, till *Adam* began to sin.

Secondly, conscience (say I) is a naturall power [*which the soule of man hath, &c.*] Now whether this power be in the understanding onely, or partly in the understanding and partly in the will, I finde controverted amongst the learned. My opinion, I here humbly lay downe, but I undertake not to state and determine the controversie. This power we speak of, I conceive to be a reflect act of the practicke understanding onely, transcendently

scendently seconded by the power of the holy Ghost. Saint *Iohn* confirms the first, that it is a reflect act of the practicke understanding onely, where speaking of this power in the soule, saith, *And hereby we doe know, that we know him, if we keepe his Commandements.* 1 *Iohn* 2. 3. That is, as if *Iohn* had said, We doe view our waies by the word of God (which is an act onely of the understanding) and finding them to be in some measure leuell with that holy rule, we have this comfortable reflection backe upon our soules, that our faith is not a fancy, but a faith which worketh by love, and so sincere and saving: which reflection, is no other as I conceive, but an act of the understanding, collecting a divine conclusion from divine premises. He that keepeth Gods Commandements, knoweth God savingly; that he may safely conclude: but I doe keepe the Commandements of God, this I know, for I have viewed the Commandements of God, and my life by them: and therefore I know, that is, I am assured that I truely and savingly

know God: which is no other, but that power in the soule, which we call conscience.

The Apostle Saint *Paul* (I conceive) confirmes the second, that it is a reflect act of the understanding, *transcendently seconded by the holy Ghost*, where he saith, *My conscience bearing me witnesse [in the holy Ghost,] Rom. 9. 1.* That is, my conscience transcendently seconded and assisted, by the holy Ghost, doth strongly testifie to my soule, that I am full of bowels towards my kinsmen after the flesh, and could doe any thing, or suffer any thing for their good. The order according to which the holy Ghost strikes in with conscience, is this. The understanding makes a double proposition, one grounded in the word of God, the other in the heart of man: as thus, He that keepeth the Commandements of God, truly loves God; this proposition is grounded in the word of God: but I doe keepe the Commandements of God; this is grounded in the heart of man: And then drawes a conclusion from both; therefore I doe truly love God.

This

This conclusion whilst holy and drawne from divine premises, to wit, the word of God, and the grace of God in the heart of man; the Spirit of God strikes in with the soule, in making this conclusion, and assists the weake soule, so that he concludes thus with *strong confidence*, that he truly loves God: and not onely secretly assistes, but seconds, and saies the same thing to man, that his owne spirit doth. Then is fulfilled that of the Apostle, *the Spirit beares witness with our spirits, that we are the Sonnes of God*. If the premises be corrupt which the understanding makes, (for the minde makes propositions suitable to the light that is in it, from which to argue the goodnesse or badnesse of man) then the Divell that lying spirit, strikes in and seconds the soule, in that corrupt conclusion, which he collects from corrupt principles, concerning himselfe: So that now the deluded soule is peremptory, and wiser then ten men that give a reason: in these is fulfilled that of the Apostle, *Their minds and consciences being defiled*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, I affirme conscience to be a naturall power, which the soule of man hath [*above all unreasonable creatures, &c.*] Bruite beasts have no conscience : and yet they better serve God in their kind, then many of us which have conscience. Bruit beasts want reason, and therefore are not capable subjects of conscience ; and yet against reason, and against conscience, man oftentimes does worse then a beast.

Fourthly, conscience (say I) is a naturall power which the soule of man hath above all unreasonable creatures, [*to compare his waies by some rule ; and according as his waies agree or disagree with that rule, so answerably to beare witnessse with, or against him.*] By the former part of this description, is shewed unto us, what conscience is according to its being in the soule: *It is a naturall power, &c.* By the latter part of this description, is shewed unto us, what conscience is according to its office in the soule.

The office of conscience, according to the description here given, consists in

in two things. First, conscience compares a mans waies by some rule. Secondly, Conscience beares witnesse with or against a man, according as a mans waies agree or disagree with that rule. First say I, conscience compares a mans waies by some rule. If the understanding be enlightened with the truth, to wit, the word of God; then conscience compares the waies of man, by a perfect rule, to wit, the word of God. But if the understanding be inlightned, with naturall and morall principles onely, then conscience compares a mans waies according to these principles onely, and so by an imperfect rule. For 'tis my judgment, with submission to better, that conscience in every man, follows that light which the understanding holds up unto it. This I know, that a man may and often doth, goe against conscience: but conscience goes not against that light, which the understanding holds up unto it. A man may outwardly say this or that, contrary to the light of his understanding, but conscience inwardly speakes, at the same time, according to that light. I will

will further cleare this unto you, by an apt example. *Paul* you know zealously persecuted the Church of God, and his conscience (for ought that I can finde) never checkt him, but doubtlesse rather acquitted him, for it; I meane as long as he remained unconverted. And the reason, I thinke, is sufficiently rendred, where 'tis said, that he *did it ignorantly*. That is, according to that light which his understanding held up unto him, he thought he did God good service, in sheading the blood of his Saints, which me thinkes makes manifest what I say, that conscience still follows the light of the understanding.

The Apostle *Paul* persecuted the Church of God, and yet obtained mercie, because (saith the text) *he did it ignorantly*: hee did out of conscience (as I may say) shead the blood of the Saints. But now the most men have received the knowledge of the truth; & therefore if now men persecute the Saints of God, either in heart, tongue, or hand, they goe against knowledge, & so consequently against conscience; for

for conscience followes the light of the understanding; and so comes neere the committing of the unpardonable sin, to the committers of which God hath said, there shall be no mercy shewed, either in this world, or in the world to come.

Here I would have you observe this, for the further clearing of what hath beene said, *That the word of God is the rule, by which conscience compares the waies of men, so far-forth as the understanding is enlightened by the word of God, and no further.* So far-forth as the understanding is ignorant of the word of God, so far-forth conscience is silent. As long as *St. Paul* knew not lust to be a sinne, conscience never accused him for lust as a sin. And this surely is one reason why many shun the preaching of the word of God, and the studie thereof, least by *encreasing knowledge they should increase griefe*, as *Salomon* saith: least by this meanes they should come to the knowledge of their sinnes, and so conscience pull them by the throat for them. Of such as these the Apostle Saint *Peter* speakes where
he

he saith, *Of this they are willingly ignorant, that by the word of God the Heavens were of old, and the earth, and the world that then was perished. 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4, 5.* That is, they did purposely doe as much as in them lay, to put out that light which was in their understandings, which told them that he which at first made the heavens by his word, and did by his word destroy them with water, would one day againe destroy them with fire and brimstone: this they did labour to keepe themselves ignorant of, that so they might without checke of conscience, goe on in their sinnes.

To such as these I may truely say with the Apostle, *If our Gospell be hid, it is hid unto those which perish, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds, of them which believe not, least the light of the glorious Gospell of Jesus Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.* He that keepes himselfe in ignorance, that his conscience may let him goe on quietly in wickednesse, loves to goe to hell without controule. Thou that canst not indure, that thy

thy conscience should reprove thee secretly, 'tis no wonder that thou canst not endure, that thy minister should reprove thee publikely. Thou that canst not endure that thy conscience should reprove thee for sinne now, must endure whether thou wilt or no, conscience to torment thee for thy sin, hereafter.

The second thing that I would have you to observe is this, *That conscience doth compare all a mans wayes with the rule of the word, so far-forth as the understanding is enlightned with the word.* All that light which the understanding hath received from the word of God, conscience takes it and makes it a rule, by which he measures all a mans waies, thoughts, words, and deeds, to trie what agreement or disagreement there is, betweene them and the rule.

That conscience compares the thoughts of men by the word of God, so farre forth as the understanding is inlightned by the word, as well as words and deeds, is manifest by the language of the Apostle, where he
speakes

speakes of the Gentiles on this wise,
*Which shew the worke of the Law written
 in their hearts, their consciences also bea-
 ring witnesse, & their [thoughts] the mean
 while accusing or excusing one another.*
Rom. 2.15. Divine light so far-forth
 as it shines into the hearts of heathens,
 conscience makes use of it as a rule, by
 which to examine their very thoughts,
 and so answerably to accuse or excuse
 them, as their thoughts are found to
 agree or disagree with the rule. Saint
Paul likewise in the ninth to the *Rom.*
 at the first verse, confirmes this truth.
*I say the truth in Christ I lie not, my con-
 science bearing me witnesse in the holy
 Ghost, that I have great heavinesse and
 continuall sorrow in my heart, for I could
 wish my selfe separate from Christ, for my
 kins-folk in the flesh.* Saint *Paul* here tels
 us that his conscience did beare him
 witnesse, that his thoughts and desires
 were thus and thus sincere, respecting
 his brethren; which conscience will
 never doe, before he hath leavelled a
 mans thoughts and desires by the
 word of God, and found them to be
 so: by consequence then it is mani-
 fest,

fest, that conscience compares a mans thoughts by the rule, as well as his words and deeds.

Conscience keeps court in the heart, and therefore can and doth observe our thoughts, as well as our words and deeds. Conscience keeps a Court of justice in the heart, and sits upon the life and death of the soule, which is ten thousand times more precious then the body; and therefore will not sift this and that, and let other things goe, which the word condemnes, as well, and as plainely, as it doth any thing else. The word of God you know condemnes evill thoughts, as well as evill words; and not onely grosse evill thoughts, as thoughts of murder, adultery, and the like, but *vaine idle thoughts*; and therefore conscience can doe no lesse, as Gods Vicegerent in this lower circuit, but examine these, as well as words and deeds, by the rule of Gods word, to see how farre they agree to, or disagree from it. Which worke when conscience hath exactly done, then *it beares witness with or against a man, answerably as*

G a mans

a mans waies agree or disagree with this rule: which is the last clause in the description of conscience, and comes now according to order and method to be a little opened.

Conscience when he hath compared a mans waies by the rule, and exactly found out how they agree with, or disagree from it; the next thing he doth, is, he beares witnesse with, or against a man. This clause I adde, in the description of conscience; because 'tis a divine power placed in the soule of man, to be as it were a judge betweene God and man. Conscience takes notice of things together with God, and compares them by the rule together with God, and then pronounceth sentence with or against man, for God. First I say, conscience takes notice of things together with God: and hence it is, say the learned, that this power in the soule is called *conscience*. *Scire* (say they) is said of him which knowes one thing alone, so as none else knowes it with him. *Conscire* is said of three or foure, which know some secret together. *Conscience* therefore

fore, must needs signifie a combination of two at the least, in the knowledge of some secret thing. Now this combination cannot be betweene man and man; for man doth not know the secrets of my heart, no further then as I reveale them to him: this combination neither cannot be betweene man and Angels, for they doe not know the secrets of my heart together with my selfe. This combination then must needs be, between God and man. God knowes all our thoughts, *There cannot be a thought hid from thee*, saith Job of God. And he knowes all our words and deeds: *all things are naked before him, with whom we have to doe.* And man also by a gift from God, knowes together with God, his thoughts, words, and deeds; and compares them by the rule together with God; and then beares witnesse with or against himselfe to God: and this gift we therefore call *conscience*.

Iob 42. 2.

Here note this, *That conscience beares witnesse with or against a man, no farther then his waies agree or disagree with the word of God.* There can be no bribing

of conscience, to speak better or worse of any man to God, then his waies deserve. Conscience beares witness against a man, when having compared the waies of man by the word of God, he findes them to disagree from it. But here possibly some of you may say, Doth any mans conscience beare witness against himselfe? against his owne land-Lord, in whose house he dwels? To this I answer, yes. The Apostle confirms this, where he saith, *If our hearts condemne us, God is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things,* 1 Iohn 3. 20. *If our hearts condemne us, &c.* Conscience will give testimony and sentence, against the very wombe that beares him, if wicked; and so far-forth as he knowes it to be wicked. Conscience cannot now give an exact testimony, nor an exact sentence against a sinner, because the understanding holds not up unto it an exact light: *We know but in part*, though God *know all things*; and knowing but in part, conscience yet can doe his office but in part; but what he does is faithfull and righteous, according to the light

light which the understanding holds up unto him. But hereafter when we shal all appeare before the judgement seate of Christ, Christ will by his Almighty power, set up a glorious light in every mans understanding, so that they shall know all things done in the body whether good or evill, as completely as Christ himselfe, and then conscience will speake as plaine and as broad as Christ himselfe: and hence 'tis that men shall stand silent before the Judge of all the world.

The testimony which conscience gives against a man now, is very audible: so audible that it causeth the merriest heart, in the midst of laughter to be sadde. It will make the stoutest sinner stoop, his heart to ake and shake within him, and his countenance to gather blacknesse. But at the great day, it will make every sinner in *Belsazzars* case, & worse, when he saw the hand-writing in the wall. It will make sinners at their wits end: to *wish for mountaines to fall upon them, and cover them, or dispatch them utterly.*

Conscience beares witness with a
 G 3 man,

man, when having compared his waies by the rule, he findes that they agree therewith. So audible and so sensible is the testimony, that conscience gives now with a man, that it makes him to rejoyce in the midst of all outward troubles and hardships: *For our rejoycing is this* (saith Paul and Timothy in the midst of all their outward troubles) *the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity and go-ly sincerity, not with fleshy wisdom, but by the grace of God. we have had our conversation in the World.* Conscience spake so loud, and so plain, and so comfortable, in giving testimony with them concerning their integrity, that they understood well what he said, and were more comforted by this still testimony within, then if hundreds without, had given testimony with them to their adversaries, and said they were upright men. But much more audible and comfortable will the testimony of conscience with a man, be, at the great day: but I let that alone till then.

At present I hope you see enough, by this description of conscience, to
con-

confirm the truth in hand, to wit,
That conscience can give testimony, concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie of a mans conversation. New the reasons why God hath given unto conscience this power, are these: First, That man might have some thing within him, to comfort or terrifie him, when all things without faile. Secondly, That Gods proceedings with man, may be by man, confessed to be just. Lastly, That God at the great day, may dispatch a great deale of weighty businesse speedily.

First, God hath given this power to conscience, to give testimony concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie, of mans conversation, That so man might have some thing within him, to comfort or terrifie him, when all things without him faile. If a man walke sincerely, conscience will be a comfort to him, when father, mother, husband, wife, wealth, and all friends faile him. And this comfort will be a continuall feast, in famine; continuall honour, in disgrace; continuall wealth, in poverty; continuall liberty in bonds;

continuall peace, in warre ; continuall health, in sicknesse ; continuall ease, under every burthen. This was meate to eate, to *Paul* and *Timothy*, which the world knew not of. Nay, this was transcendent consolation in the midst of troubles, to *Paul* and *Timothy*, which the beleieving Corinthians dreamt not of : and therefore 'tis, that they thus wrote to them, *Our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we have sincerely ordered our conversation in the world.* As if they had said thus, Though we have lost many comforts, yet we have not lost all ; we have something within us, which is a continuall comfort to us, in the midst of all the sorowes and miseries, which we meet withall ; and that is, the peace of a good conscience. And if man walk not sincerely, conscience is by divine appointment, to be an accuser, condemner, and in part an executioner of torture upon the delinquent, in this life. This worme shall gnaw within, when things are carryed smooth without. This dog shall bite and teare within, when all are afraid to barke without.

This

This blood-hound shall dogge the sinner ; let him goe with *Cain* into the Land of *Nod*, into what place he will, or to what imployment he will: so that proud man shall feelee something within, for his wickednesse, when he feeles nothing without.

Secondly, God hath given this power to conscience, to give testimony concerning the simplicity or unsoundnes of mans conversation ; That so all Gods proceedings with man, both here and hereafter, may be confessed to be just. *One witnesse, said God, shall not testifie against any person, to cause him to die, Deut. 35. 20.* Two witnesses God accounted sufficient, to vindicate every act of justice amongst men : but under two, God would not allow judicature against any man ; that so judgement might be cleare, the Judge confessed to be righteous, and the malefactor silent. God the great Judge of all the world, keeps himselfe to this rule, in his proceedings of judicature against man. Two witnesses will God have, against every malefactor, to wit, Christ and conscience.

God

God doth immediately see all things done by man, and is a witnesse him-
 selfe, to all that he commits in the
 body, as we may guesse by his owne
 words. *Because they have committed vil-
 lany in Israel, and have committed adul-
 tery with their neighbours wives, and
 have spoken lying words in my Name,
 which I have not commanded them, even
 [I know] and am a witnesse, saith the Lord,*
 Jer. 29. 23. By this we see, that God the
 Father sees our sinnes, and is a wit-
 nesse; but because he will not be a
 witnesse in his own cause, he will have
 two sufficient witnesses besides him-
 selfe, to wit, Christ, and conscience:
 both very true.

The Divell would willingly be a
 witnesse against man, as an evill spirit
 that knowes much by man, but does
 not know so much as the Spirit of man,
 which is in him: and therefore
 not a sufficient witnesse. But if that
 evill Spirit, did know as much by
 man, as mans owne evill spirit which
 is in him, yet being corrupt, he would
 prove a false witnesse against man: a
 Knight of the Post, and sweare any
 thing

thing against man, to bring as great misery upon him, as is upon himselfe, if he might be admitted for a witnesse, such is his divellish hatred and malice, to all beings better then his owne; but therefore God will not admit of him as a witnesse, for or against a man. Two true witnesses will God have, one without a man, and another within him; one in heaven and another in earth; to wit, Christ and conscience: *Behold I have given him for a witnesse to the People,* saith God the Father of Christ, *Isa. 55. 4.* And this witnesse is in Heaven, saith *Iob: Behold my witnesse is in Heaven Job 16. 19.* Not so in heaven, that he is not also in earth; or as if he were ignorant of any thing done in earth, for then he could not be a sufficient witnesse. *Iob* speakes of Christ, according to his speciall place of residence; and that is in heaven: but Christ hath a Country house, here below in our hearts, where he hath one abiding continually, that is equall to himselfe, that tels him all, to wit, his spirit: so that Christ is as competent a witnesse as conscience, that sits as Register

gister still in the heart, and never stirres out of his place.

These two witnesses do, as that man was commanded to doe, which had a sheepe committed to his trust, and the sheepe torne in pieces by wild beasts; he was to bring some of that which was left; some horne or hoofe, or any part else that was left, for a witnesse of the truth thereof. *Exod. 22. 13.* Thus Christ and conscience bring before God & the soule, those precepts which were by God committed to man, to be kept, and which he hath suffered his unruly heart to breake to pieces: my meaning is, so lively doe these two witnesses set before the sinner, the breach of every precept, according to every circumstance, as ever any party under the Law, could set before the owner, the tearing in pieces of his cattell, by the limmes and pieces thereof. And this being done, divine sentence is given, and the soule must needs be silent, being so legally handled; and Angels and Saints be forc'd to breake forth and say, *Righteous art thou O God in all thy waies, and holy in all thy works.*

Lastly,

Lastly, God hath given this power to conscience, to give testimony concerning mans simplicity or hypocrisie, that so God at the great day, may dispatch a great deale of weighty businesse speedily. And I will come neere to you to judgement, and I will be [a swift witnesse] against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and false swearers, saith the Lord, Mal. 3. 5. What the Lord then spake respecting a particular judgement, the same will be Gods proceeding with all at the great day. The bookes shall be opened; Christs booke, and the booke of conscience; and so in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; that is very speedily, all things shall be cleare to Judge and malefactor, without troubling Juries, and other witnesses, as we doe here, which would make a long worke, at that great assize; and all persons be judged & sent to their places; and so righteously judged, that not one shall open his mouth to complaine. Now this could not possibly be a work speedily done, if God had not given this power to conscience, to reflect and give testimony, and to be instead of, & better

better then a thousand witnesses beside, and all debating pro and con, betweene them.

The wisdom of God is here to be admired : for he hath made such a witnesse to give testimony with Christ for or against a man, every way so fit, that nothing in the world can be judged so fit. Christ we must all confesse to be very fit, to be Gods Delegate; because he came out of the bosome of God, and knows exactly all his Lawes, which he hath given man to observe, which Angels doe not, and man is a party, and therefore both unfit. But the holy Ghost cannot be judged fit to be mans Delegate, because one with the Father and Sonne, and so a party in the cause. And as for Angels, they know not neither the proposed rule exactly, nor the aberrations of the Delinquent; and as for men, they are parties in the cause, and so would juggle together, and sweare one for another: or at least as one flesh and bone, with foolish pity spoile a City (as we say :) that is, they would speake flattering and halting, and so over-turne justice
at

at last, after a great deale of doe with them. Now to prevent all this danger, toile, and stirre; God hath created such a power within man as to observe all things done by man; and no lesse one with man, then Christ is with the Father; and therefore as in-
exceptible a Delegate for man on the one side, as Christ is for God on the other side. And these two of an instant, without all disturbance, distraction, or turmoile, give in exact evidence concerning mans integrity or hypocrisie; and so speedily without all clamour, sentence, and execution, and all is finished; and the Judge of all the world, does more weighty businessse in a moment, and farre better, then all the Judges in this world could do, in the age of the world.

Having thus given you the point, and the grounds of it; let us see in the next place, how usefull this may be unto us all. Hath God given power to conscience, to give testimony concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie of mans waies? Why then let us all take heed, how we order our conversation
in

in this world. Give leave to your soules to thinke nothing, speake nothing, nor doe nothing, but what you would have written downe, and delivered into the Judge of all the world at the great day. When we know a tale-teller is neare us, we are very carefull what we say, or doe. Why, we have alwaies a tell-truth in our bosomes, where ever we goe, or whatsoever we doe; who will tell all to the Judge of all the world, that we thinke, speake or doe: and therefore let us watch over our thoughts, words, and deeds; and so thinke, and so speake, and so doe, as those that looke to have the comfortable testimony of conscience with them, at the great day of account; *That in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.* Under the old covenant, God had a *Tabernacle of witnessse*, which was the inner Court where the Arke was, in which the Law was, to give testimony against the Israelites, when they did evill. So God hath now under the new covenant, *a Tabernacle of witnessse*; and this is the inner Court, to wit, the heart

heart, where conscience is, to give testimony against us, when we transgress. And therefore let us set a watch upon our hearts, and tongues, and hands, and intreat God with *David*, to hold up our goings in his pathes, that our foot-steps slip not. *Psal 17.5.*

I note this, because I see multitudes live, as if there were neither conscience, nor God, nor Divell, Heaven nor Hell. The speech of the Prophet of old, may I fitly here make use of. Men were then so audaciously wicked, that the very shew of their countenance did testifie against them: they declared their sinnes as *Sodom*, and hid them not: *Woe unto their soule* (saith God) *they have rewarded evill unto themselves, Isa. 3.9.* Thus may I say of multitudes amongst us now, The very shew of their countenance, doth testifie against them. The wanton eye, the fiery eye, the droune walling eye, the burly Malmsey nose, the painted face, Anticke postures, gestures, and fashions, doe all as *Iob* wrinkles in his face, testifie against thousands, that they little lay to heart this doctrine, *That conscience can speake,*

H

and

and tell all their doings to God. Proud Hamans, time-serving Doege, drunken Nabals, whorish Iefabels, scoffing Ishmaels, declare their sinnes as Sodome, and hide them not; and as for conscience, turne him off with a glasse of Sacke, and a Play-house.

But let me say to these wretches, with the Prophet, *Woe unto their soules, for they have rewarded evill unto themselves.* You have made a long, blacke, bloody bill, for conscience to open against you, the last day of this Terme, to wit, at death; which shall be tried the first day of the next Terme, to wit, as soone as you are out of the body: and then will conscience give testimony, so strongly against you, that if you would give ten thousand Rivers of Oyle, nay, if you would give the fruit of your bodie, for the sinne of your soule, it shall doe no good; the cause shall goe against you, and sentence shall be past upon you: and then shall you know by woefull experience, the meaning of that place, *Rom. 2. 5.* *But after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy selfe wrath, against the*

the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God.

Wherefore three things I would give in counsell to you all: seeing conscience can give testimony concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie of mans waies; suspend him not; sleight not his language; but give diligent attention to what he saith. Let us not stop the mouth of conscience, seeing he can speake, and tell us what we are. Many there are that labour to stop the mouth of conscience, when he tels them plainely of their sinnes, and to destroy that divine power which conscience hath, to speake in them, and to them. The Apostle *Peter* gives us a hint of these, where he saith, *Scoffers shall come in the last time, and shall say, where is the promise of his comming.* For this (saith he) they are willingly ignorant of, that by the word of God, the *Heavens were of old*, 2 Pet. 3. 5. When conscience told those scoffers, that would live in their sinnes, and scoffed at the day of judgement, saying, where is the promise of his comming; that God made the world by his word, and

drowned it quickly by his Word, when it was overspread with wilfull wickednesse; and therefore you have like cause, to looke for like swift misery, for as much as you are so wilfully and desperately wicked. This sharpe and plaine language of conscience, they could not indure; and therefore willingly laboured to darken this divine light, and to silence this faithfull House-Chaplain. Thus 'tis with many sinners now; Conscience now and then, delivers stinging language to their soules, for such and such sinnes; and then they set to lift this faithfull Monitor out of his place; and because they cannot possibly doe this, being so immediately inducted by God, they strive to gagge his mouth, and kill him; by running wilfully into wickednesse, against all checkes and reproofes of conscience, and friends; as men desperately resigning up their soules to the divell, because God will not humour, and satisfie them in their owne waies: and so shipwracke faith, conscience, soule, and all for ever. That which oft-times followes upon this

this is selfe-stabbing, selfe-drowning, selfe-hanging, selfe-poysoning, and the like.

This is crying wickedness, and incurable wickednesse. 'Tis crying wickednesse to strive to gagge and kill conscience. 'Tis *Dei-cidium*, to murder God. Conscience is noother but Gods Vicegerent in the soule : or rather, Gods judiciary presence in the soule. So farre forth therefore as a man wilfully doth injury to this, he doth commit high treason against the King of Heaven. 'Tis to stab the Judge of all the world as he sits upon the Bench, speaking Law and Justice, which very nature abhorres, as desperately divellish.

And 'tis incurable wickednesse: for 'tis to destroy the first *medium* of conversion, by which the holy Ghost workes in man, to gagge and kill conscience. The first thing that the Spirit of God doth when he come to convert a sinner, is to convince his conscience, and to make that sting him for his sinnes, and then stirre him up to long after, and to seeke for Christ; and

then gives faith in Christ, and so saves the sinner. Now he that strives to silence conscience, undermines his owne salvation, in the very foundation and first stone thereof. He doth wilfully and wickedly prevent his owne soule, of all the good that God doth in this way, to bring sinners home to himselfe. Thou doest little consider, O desperate wretch, what great wickednesse thou committest, that strivest to gagge and kill conscience. Thou committest double murther, in a spirituall sense; which is murther of the highest kind: thou doest murther God and thine owne soule. And therefore I beseech you all, to take heed of this practice. Seeing God hath given conscience ability and parts to speake, let him speake freely, though he speake never so sharply and plainely, and doe not check him.

2 Nay doe not sleight him: which is the next thing I would a little presse upon you. A man that can speake, and speake to good purpose, though he be an enemy, we so farre honour him, as to let him speake out fully
what

what he hath to say, and not turn away the eare from him : give but this honour to conscience. Many deale with conscience, as *Felix* did with *Paul*; he willingly heard *Paul* a while, concerning the faith of Christ, but when he came to reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come, he set *Felix* into a trembling; and then saith he to *Paul*, *Goe thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will send for thee, Act. 24.25.* So many will heare conscience, whilst he gives testimony with them, of this good thing, and that, which they have done, and it may be whilst he tells them of lesser faults, but when once he comes to reason throughly with them about their sinnes, which are as deare as right eyes, and right hands unto them, and threatens them home, *with judgement to come*: when he tells them of that righteousness and temperance which the word commands, how much they have neglected it, and what they are liable to for it, and so sets their soules into a cold shaking sweat, then they have enough of conscience, and they

turne their eares and minds, to some other matters ; and send conscience away, till they be better at leisure : this is no other, but to sleight conscience in his place.

God will make no other of this, but contempt of his prime Court of justice here below, and those that sit chiefe there, as for him : and thou wilt finde no other, but a great deale of secret soule mischief by this. God hath no other Court here below, but the heart of man ; and no Judge in this Court, but conscience : and conscience being Gods Chiefe-judge, wilt thou hearken to him when thou pleasest ; and when thou pleasest, turne the deafe eare to him, say what he will ? Doest thou thinke that God sweares Judges for this lower Circuit, which know not Law, nor how to speake upon the Bench, worth the hearing ? Doest thou thinke thy selfe too great, to be arraigned by God ? and to answer to such interrogatories, as he shall put unto thee ?

As God will make no other but contempt of this, so thou wilt finde no other

ther but a great deale of secret soule mischief by this. To sleight the voice of conscience, is the ready way to bring the soule, into security and presumption, which are unsensible damning evils. When there was no King in *Israel*, nor royall Courts of judicature, every man did what was right in his owne eyes. So when this royall Court of conscience is sleighted, the soule will grow fearelesse and carelesse, and man will give leave to himselfe, to thinke, and speake, and doe as he listeth, and yet *promise peace to himselfe, though he live in the wickednesse of his owne heart*; then which, what can be a greater soule evill?

Wherefore honour God, in his Royall way of judicature: and seeing he hath appointed an able Iudge in thy soule, of thy waies; sleight him not, but *diligently hearken to what he saith*; which is the last thing I would a little presse upon you. Conscience can speake better of thy waies, then any man can doe: therefore give him leave to speake, and diligently observe all his words, and tell me what he
faith

faith to thee. Doth he not tell thee, that thou art a drunkard, an adulterer, a swearer, a prophaner of the Lords day, an unjust dealer, a selfe-seeker, a time-server, a man that orderest thy devotion and conversation, suitable to the times, a man that makes thine owne ends thy aime, in all thy actions? Doth he not tell thee that thou art an idle person, a busie-body, a railer, a scoffer, and malicious person? Or what is it that conscience saith unto thee? For he speakes to no man else, but to thy selfe, so faithfull and discret is he; and therefore I can enquire of none but of thy selfe O sinner, what conscience saies unto thee. Conscience can give testimony with or against thee; prethee hearken to him, and tell me what he saith. When Christ was arraigned, and stood still and said nothing, the high Priest arose (saith the Text) and said unto him, *answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witnesse against thee? Math. 26. 62.* So say I to you, conscience doth arraigne you now and then, and he doth give testimony; what testimony is it that he

he gives? Is it against you, or with you?

If against you: What is it that he accuses you of, and condemnes you for? Doth he condemne thee, for the vanity of thy thoughts, for the levity of thy words and deeds? Doth he condemne thee for the pride of thine heart, or for the pride of thine heart and life both? Doth he condemne thee for sheading of innocent blood? for scoffing and persecuting the waies of God? Doth he condemne thee for hugging some secret sinne, which the word disallowes? or for thy superficiall perfunctory piety? Whatsoever conscience accuses and condemnes thee for, honour this Vice-roy so farre, as to weigh thoroughly what he saith; and call to minde thy waies, and consider whether they have not beene, so as conscience saith: and if so, then compare what conscience saith of thy course, with the word of God; and if conscience within, and the word of God without agree in one, in what they say against thy course; doe thou strike in with thy conscience and the

the word of God, and say of thy selfe and waies, as they say, and joyne with them in judging and condemning thy selfe, and thy courses.

And then begge the Lord, that he will not strike in and judge thee too; for if he judge thee too, then thou art gon for ever. Tell him, that though thou hast sinned, yet Christ hath died; and here hold. And then begge him to cleanse and cure thy wicked heart, that thou maist goe, and sinne no more, least a worse thing befall thee: namely, to be delivered from the hands of a condemning conscience, into the hands of a condemning God, who *will teare thee in pieces, and there will be none to deliver.*

If conscience give testimony with you, that you are *pure and upright*, as he useth the expression to *Iob*, that in *simplicity and godly sincerity*, you have had *your conversation in the world*; why then, weigh your waies by the word of God, and see whether the word of God saith the same of your waies which conscience doth: if so, why then doe you strike in too, and say as conscience

science and Gods Word doe, and so
owne Gods great worke of grace in
your hearts, in making them upright;
and thinke that thou canst never de-
clare love enough to God, which hath
declared so much love to thee, as to
make thee a man after his owne heart,
to be a companion for his owne Sonne
and selfe, in grace and glory.

FINIS.

Edward J. Doogan Fund:
his books

of the
history



2 C O R. I. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.

THE third proposition, which now according to order and method, comes to be handled, is this, *That consciouſnesse to our selues, of the simplicity and sincerity, of our conversation, will yeeld us joy in the midst of troubles.* Pauls and Timothies conscience, giving testimony with them, concerning the simplicity and sincerity of their conversation, made them to rejoyce

rejoyce in the midst of all the troubles they underwent. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.* I think the Psalmist points at this truth too, where he saith, *Unto the upright there ariseth light [in the darknesse,] &c. Psal. 112.4.* By the darknesse, I conceive he meanes troubles and injuries from wicked men, which because they are more vehement then many other troubles are, *the mercies of the wicked being cruelties,* the Psalmist else-where calls them, the sorrows of hell, as here he calls them *in the darknesse:* now in this darknesse, though the darknesse, that is very sharpe misery, yet there *ariseth light in it;* by light I conceive is here meant, comfort and joy from conscience, giving testimony concerning their uprightnesse, as attended with the spirit of *glory and of God,* as Peter calls the holy Spirit of consolation. If you conceive not this Scripture plaine enough, to consent with my Text, read *Dauids* language in the seventh Psal. 10, 11. *My defence is of God,*
which

which saveth the upright in heart. God judgeth the righteous ; and God is angry with the wicked every day. As if *David* had said, This is my comfort in the midst of all the troubles and feares I am in, that my conscience tells me, my conversation in the world hath beene lead according to the dictate of an upright heart, no way injurious to these sonnes of *Belial*, which labour to be every way injurious to me ; and therefore I am sure that God, which is alwaies a defence unto the upright, will be a defence unto me : God considers the waies of the upright, and smiles upon their soules to their great consolation, when the world frownes, this I finde by experience ; but rotten wretches God is continually angry with, and this he will first or last (I am sure) make them to know with a witness. *Salomon* likewise consents to this as a truth, to wit, That the testimony of conscience concerning the simplicity of mans conversation, will yeeld him joy in the midst of troubles, as we may collect from his language, *Prov.* 15. 23. *A man hath joy* (saith he) *by the*
I
answer

answer of his mouth. When a man upon every occasion speakes sincerely, conscience within cheares and comforts a man whatsoever followes upon plaine dealing to the outward man. 'Tis me thinkes as if *Salomon* had said, Let a man speake sincerely upon all occasions, and he shall be sure to finde his conscience comfort him, in the midst of all troubles that may follow upon it.

Troubles are either naturall, or accidentall. Naturall troubles I call such as man is borne unto, by reason of sin. By the fall of *Adam*, man is borne to troubles, as the sparkes flie upward, *Iob* 5. 7. to troubles in body, in soule, in husband, in wife, in children, in servants, in kindred, in friends, in substance, in all things that are given man for his good. To the just as well as unjust, come troubles in all these; onely here is the difference, conscioussnesse of simplicity and sincerity sweetens all those to the godly, whereas the wicked must swallow them in their full bitternesse. That conscience, which tells a man that in simplicity and godly sincerity

sincerity, he hath had his conversation in the world, will also tell him, that all troubles in the flesh, shall worke together for the good of his Spirit; and that God will give strength to beare them, and a seasonable deliverance out of them; and this sweetens these bitters. That conscience, which tells a man, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, he hath ordered his conversation in the world, will tell him also, that 'tis a wise and gracious Father that doth thus, and thus afflict him; yea, conscience now and then shewes the soule, the bright beames of Gods smiling countenance, that he may see that 'tis indeed a reconciled father which doth afflict; and this like *Jonathans* honey revives much, and fetches life in swooning fits, under great troubles. That conscience which told *Iob* that he was sincere, told him also in the midst of all his troubles, that his Redeemer lived, and he should see him, with his fleshly eyes: moreover it told him, that when God had tryed him, *that she should come forth as gold.* This sugared his bitter potion, and

*Pl. 18, 28.

sweetned every bitter drugg he took. The like may be said of *David*; his conscience told him that he was upright, and this conscience told him also, that God was his God; *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, and I will exalt thee. Psal. 118. 28.* and that God would *light his candle, and enlighten his darknesse**: that is, turne all his sorrowes into joy, and his troubles into advantages; and this made every burthen easie. Thus we see, that conscioufnesse to our selves of the simplicity of our courie, yeelds comfort in all troubles for sinnes sake, which I call naturall troubles.

Troubles caused by religion and religious walking, which I call accidentall troubles, because by accident not of its proper nature, religion exasperates wicked men against us, these I conceive my text principally points at; and as for all these, though the fiercest kind of troubles, and therefore called by *David*, *the sorrowes of hell*, yet if a Christian hath but the voice of conscience with him, that he hath walked simply & sincerely in the world,

world, this will keepe his head above water, though these waves be never so tempestuous: this will make a man sing in a dungeon at midnight, as *Paul* and *Silas* did: this will make a man smile in fiery flames, as many of the Martyrs did: this will make a man alwaies rejoyce, in the midst of all sorrowes: *as sorrowfull, yet alwaies rejoycing*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. Sorrowfull alwaies were the Apostles of Christ, such hard usage they alwaies met withall from the world, for the Gospels sake; and yet in the midst of all, joyfull, because of that sweet peace which their consciences spoke unto them, that they were not such as the world judged them to be, but were simple and sincere in life and doctrine; and so this Scripture sounds the same in sense and substance with my text: *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world.*

You have seene now, in what troubles the testimony of conscience, concerning

cerning a mans simplicity, will rejoyce a Christian. I will in the next place shew you, what rejoycing 'tis that the testimony of conscience will yeeld a man in trouble. Joy is either sensuall, or spirituall. Sensuall joy is a meere and naked joy in the creature, so farre as it pleaseth the senses. Of this joy speakes *Solomon*, where he saith, that *he with-held his heart from no joy*, Eccl. 2. 10. That is, any thing that might delight any sense, he got to him: he had *men singers and women singers, and all the delights of the sonnes of men*. Thus to order a mans conversation, is to live sensually and not sincerely; and therefore conscience gives testimony against this man, and not with him; and so consequently checks and curbs this joy, and not causeth it: conscience dampes this mirth much, by griping the spirit now and then, in the midst of laughter.

Spirituall joy, is the soules rejoycing in God, as reconciled in Christ.

Spirituall joy, is the soules] rejoycing in God, &c. Divine joy is therefore called spirituall, because the subject
of

of it is a spirit, and the object of it is a spirit, and all the manifestations of it spirituall. The subject of divine joy, is the spirit of man. Divine joy doth not take onely the care, or the eye, or the taste, or the smell, as carnall joy doth, but the heart: *Let the heart of them rejoyce, that seeke the Lord, Psal. 105. 3.* The heart is broken for sinne, and this is made to rejoyce in Gods mercy, as a pardoner of sinne: the same bones which are broken, are made to rejoyce. *Make me to heare joy and gladnesse, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce. Psal. 51. 8.* Davids heart was so overcharged with sorrow, that his bones were ready to breake in his body, and in this he desired some divine refreshing, that so all things out of order might be quieted and composed againe. As sorrow is no sorrow, unlesse it take the heart; so joy is no joy, unlesse it warme the Spirit. And therefore saith David, *My soule shall be joyfull in the Lord, [it] shall rejoyce in his salvation. Psal. 35. 9.*

God doth honour that in man with joy, with which man honours him by

obedience: now, the soule of the upright, obeyes God. *My Soule hath kept thy testimonies, and I love them exceedingly, Psal. 119. 167.* and therefore God made *Dauids soule* to rejoyce. *I delight to doe thy will, O God, yea thy Law is within my heart, Psal. 40. 8.* The Law of God was within *Dauids* heart, and therefore the joy of God was within his heart too. Hypocrits doe not with their soules keepe Gods testimonies; their righteousness is like *Ephraims*, an outside righteousness that vanisheth, and so answerably God giveth them an outside superficial joy, that soone vanisheth and perisheth. They doe not set their hearts aright to obey God, as *David* useth the expression, *Psal. 78. 8.* and therefore God doth not tune and set their joy aright, so that it jarres at the best; their spirits and their faces, are not alwaies merry together; *in the midst of laughter their hearts gripe them.*

Divine joy takes the spirit of man wholly, and oft-times immediately. Divine joy takes the spirit of man wholly when at lowest. A dram, a sparkle, the least

least measure of divine joy that can be thought of, revives and makes glad the whole Spirit of man, as a drop of strong water warmes the whole heart. Hence 'tis, that *David* when he had but a drop of divine joy, distilled into his heart (as 'tis but a drop of this heavenly liquor, that our weake giddy soules can beare, whilst here below) presently he breakes out as a man warmed all over: *I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will shew forth all thy marvellous workes, Psal. 91.* The like phrase you shall finde *David* often speaking in. *David* found his whole heart warmed by those sparkles of divine joy, which God strooke in his darke dolorous heart, and this fetcht life in him still, when ready to faint and swoon, and then all he returned to God againe, which he gave him; God warmed his whole heart with joy, and he returned his whole heart to God in thanksgiving. Divine joy warmes all that is within, and all that is without, soule and body, and sets both at worke to praise God. *Praise the Lord, O my soule, and all that is within me praise his holy*

holy name. Psal. 103. 1. All that was within *David*, was warmed with divine joy, and therefore all that was within him, he would have should returne thanks and praise unto the Lord. Elsewhere, he calls upon all without him. *And my soule shall be joyfull in the Lord, it shall rejoyce in his salvation:* this is for all within him: then in the next verse saith he, *All my bones shall say, Lord who is like unto thee. Psal. 35. 9, 10.* Divine joy warms all that is within a man, and all that is without: it warms Spirit, flesh, and bones; the whole man, and sets all on fire to praise the Lord.

As divine joy takes the Spirit wholly, so it oft-times seises upon the Spirit immediately; breaking forth in the heart as lightning, without any certaine knowne *medium*, by which to come into the soule. *David* doth darkly hint this, where he saith, *Rejoyce the soule of thy servant, for unto thee, O Lord doe I lift up my soule, Psal. 86. 4.* Thou needest not this to speake in, or that creature to worke by, to revive a drooping Spirit, as if the Psalmist had said,

said, thou canst put joy and gladnesse into the sad soule of man, by thine owne immediate worke, as well as if forty Ministers were imployed : this I beleeeve, that none without thee can rejoyce me, but thou without any other canst doe it ; and therefore unto thee, doe I lift up my soule. Sometimes God doth worke by secondary meanes and inferiour instruments, to rejoyce the soules of mourning sinners, as *David* would have comforted *Hanun* by his messengers : at other times, he will make use of none but his owne Spirit, to beare witness with our spirits, that we are the Sonnes of God, and walke before him as obedient children, and so rejoyces the soules of his people in troubles. Thus did God rejoyce the soule of *Paul* and *Timothy*, in their troubles and sorrowes : by the Almighty worke of his Spirit, he assured their spirits, that they were his, and that their waies were pleasing to him ; which made them thus to speake, in the midst of miseries, *Our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity*

cerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, &c.

Secondly, divine joy is called *spirituall*, because the object of it is a spirit. The object of divine joy is God, who is a Spirit, saith *John*. Divine joy hath God for its immediate object, and all other good things as beames of this Sunne, as streams from this fountaine, as mediat objects comming from, and relating to God. God alone is the object of divine joy. Most true 'tis, that God hath alwaies in his right hand Heaven; and in his left hand earth, to wit, all the Kingdomes of this world, to bestow upon whom he will; but had he neither, or would he part with neither, to any beside himselfe, but keepe all in his owne hand, yet an upright man would joy in him, and desire no better object to let out his affections upon. *Although the Figge tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the Olives sha'l faile, and the field shall yeeld no meate, the flocke shall be cut off from the folds, and there be no herd in the stalles, yet I will rejoyce in the*

the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation, saith the Prophet, *Hab. 3. 17, 18.* *Habakkuk* will rise in judgement against a thousand thousand soules, which would never judge God worthy to be lookt after, muchlesse delighted in, if he had not Corne and Wine, Heaven and Earth to bestow upon his favorits. This text I conceive is a plaine testimony, that God alone is the object of divine joy: that is, not God as very wealthy, and very bountifull, but as very holy, and an absolute compleat being, above all things beside him. This was *Pauls* joy, to wit, in God alone, as he whom his conscience told him, he served sincerely, though weakely.

Upright men eye the divine rule in their rejoycing, as well as in all other things. Now the divine rule of joy, is, that it should be bounded and terminated in God. *Rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous, Psal. 97. 12.* This rule is repeated againe and againe in Scripture, to note how apt we are to rejoyce in creatures, and sinnes which are worse then any creatures, and

and not in God : as also to note, how strictly God lookes at this, that we should make him onely the object of our joy, and all other good things, as beames of this Sunne, as blessings from his hand; and so consequently to rejoyce still, as long as we have communion with God, and our consciences witnessing with us that we sincerely serve him, though we have nothing else in the world beside him, as *Paul* and *Timothy* did. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, &c.*

Thirdly, divine joy is called *spirituall*, because all the manifestations of it are spirituall. They that have this joy in their hearts, do not let their tongues sing ribaldry and vanity, such as flesh and blood delights in, but they *sing in the waies of the Lord*, *Psal. 138. 5.* That is, they rejoyce in divine things, to be thinking, and speaking of, and walking in, the waies of the Lord. 'Twas *Pauls* and *Timothies* matter of joy, that they could

could walke sincerely in the waies of the Lord, and this they humbly gloried in. Such as have the joy of the Lord in their hearts, their tongues speake, and sing, in such a manner, that God is extolled and magnified, according to one attribute or another, which is *making melody to God*, as the Apostle termes it. As here in my text, the Apostles so expressed divine joy, that the power and goodnesse of the Lord were magnified, that he could and would give internall comfort, to those that did sincerely, though weakely serve him, when all externall comforts failed. Divine joy doth not, as carnall joy, transport men into drunkards, whore-masters, wantons, libertines, and so turne them out of the waies of the Lord; but raises their spirits, to a higher pitch of love to God, and so makes them walke more strictly and chearfully, *in the waies of God*. Divine joy makes a man rejoyce and worke righteousness, and not rejoyce and worke wickednesse. *Thou meetest him that rejoyceth and worketh righteousness,* Isa. 64. 5. Paul & Timothy thus rejoyced, that

that they could worke righteousnesse, that they could order their conversation sincerely, though by many handled injuriously. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, wee have had our conversation in the world. &c.*

2

Divine joy is the soules rejoycing in God [as reconciled in Christ.] Divine joy, as man upon earth is the subject of it, hath God in Christ for its object: that is, God as reconciled in Christ; for otherwise God is an enemy, and no man rejoyceth in an enemy. *And not onely so, but we also rejoyce in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the attonement. Rom. 5. 11.* We cannot joy immediately in God, as *Adam* could, because of our sinne in *Adam*, which made God angry with us: we must now have some to interpose betweene God and us, in whom is made up, what is wanting in us, and so Gods anger against us appeased: and therefore 'tis, that the Apostle thus speaks in the person of the godly, *we joy in God*
[th ough]

[through] our Lord Iesus Christ, by whom we have received the attonement. This is sweetly set forth also unto us, under metaphoricall termes by the Prophet *Iſaiah*. *I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my soule shall be joyfull in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a Bride-groome decketh himselſe with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her ſelfe with Jewels, Iſa. 61. 10.* God as cloathing us with the garments of salvation, and as covering us with a robe of righteousness, is the object of joy to fallen man; and thus we know, he doth in Christ. God freely reveales an infinite love to man in Christ, and this begets love to him, and joy in him. He washed away all our sinnes in Christs blood, covers all our wants with Christs righteousness, subjects his Sonne to suffer what we had deserved, and to merit for us, all that from which we were justly excluded, to wit, communion with God, and eternall life. This love, God ſheads abroad in the heart of man, and this makes man love God, and joy in him.

K

God

God out of Christ, is no other but a condemner of man: conscience so apprehending God, is no other but a tormentour of man: and man betweene both these is in no other but Hell: and there is no joy in Hell. God in Christ reconciles man to himselfe, and then God joyes in man, and man in God. The blood of Christ makes peace betweene God and man, and betweene man and his conscience; and makes God acquit, and conscience acquit: God to speake peace, though man be not perfect; conscience to speake peace, though man walke weakely, yet whilst sincerely; and this makes divine ioy in the heart, in the midst of all troubles, naturall or accidentall. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, &c.*

You have had a brieft hint now, by what hath beene said, what that joy is, which the testimony of conscience brings to the soule, to wit, a *conciliatory joy*, as I may fitly call it. A joy of
peace

peace and friendship, betweene God and man, and betweene man and himselfe, to wit, conscience. Conscience tels that man which walkes sincerely, that he for his part is at peace with him; and that God is the like, though men and diuels be at variance with him; and that he shall have favours spirituall and temporall, here and eternally hereafter, say and doe all his enemies what they can; and this makes the heart of man leape within him, in the midst of troubles, as the babe in *Elizabeths* wombe, when she heard the salutation of *Mary*. *Our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.*

Having shewed you in what troubles, the testimony of conscience will give joy; and what joy 'tis that conscience causeth in the soule, I will in the next place shew you the ground of the point, why the testimony of conscience, concerning a mans simplicity, must needs cause joy in the midst of troubles. This testimony of consci-

ence is attended with a *glorious power*, as the Apostle calls it, κατὰ τὸ κατὰ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ according to the *glorious power* of him, saith the originall, that is, of the holy Ghost, which makes the testimony so strong, and so transcendently comfortable, that troubles and sorrows for sincerity sake, though never so great, cannot possibly over-bear the heart. *Strengthened with all might according to [his glorious power] unto all patience and long suffering, with joyfulness.* 1 Col. 11. There is a *glorious power*, attending the testimony, of conscience, extended to upright soules, in times of great troubles for uprightnesse sake, which strengthens them *with all might*, so that all burdens cannot depresse them; *unto all patience and long suffering*, so that they will never be weary, and out of breath with bearing; and to doe all this *with joyfulness*, so that no outward hardship, can utterly exhaust joy out of their spirits. Now, the testimony of conscience concerning our simplicity and sincerity, being attended with this *glorious power* in times of trouble, as Peter saith, 'tis, *the*

*the spirit of glory and of God rests upon
sub, it must needs keepe up the dolo-
rous spirit of man, and make him re-
joyce in the greatest troubles. Paul and
Timothy doubtlesse found this glorious
power, attending the testimony of
their conscience, strengthening them
with all might, unto all patience and
long suffering with joyfulness, which
made them thus to say, For our rejoycing
is this, the testimony of our conscience, that
in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with
fleshy wisdom, but by the grace of God,
we have had our conversation in the
world.*

2

Secondly, the testimony of consci-
ence concerning mans simplicity and
sincerity, must needs rejoyce a man, in
the midst of all troubles, because con-
science now minds a man, that he
walkes in the midst of all enemies and
troubles, just as Christ did. There was
no guile found in Christs mouth,
though he was put to it againe and a-
gaine: What ever he underwent from
his Father, from the divell, and his
children, yet still he walked sincerely,
and faultered not in the least kind, for

the greatest advantage, though he was proffered all the kingdomes in the world, to doe it. Now, when conscience tells a man, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, he hath had his conversation in the world, it doth at once tell him, that he hath walked in this world, just as Christ did. As he was, so art thou in this world, O my soule; which cannot but rejoyce the heart, in the midst of the sharpest afflictions for Christs sake. Thy Saviour, O my soule, though God, yet was called a divell, nay *Beelzebub* the prince of devils; though temperate, yet called a drunkard and Wine-bibber, and companion to Publicans and Harlots; though a man without guile, yet called a deceiver; though innocent, yet scoffed, imprisoned, condemned, and executed as a malefactor. Tis just thus with thee O my soule: thou art studious to walke uprightly, and yet censured for an hypocrite: thou labourest to be better then any, and yet the world judges thee to be worse then any: thou labourest more for humility and love, then for all the wealth in

in the World, and yet the World judges thee to be fuller of pride, and malice, then any man: thou dost not blow a Trumpet, when thou givest almes, but hidest from thy left hand, what thy right hand doth, and therefore the world thinks that thy religion towards God, is without mercy towards man: thou thinkest no evill to others, but labourest to doe good to all, and yet all almost thinke evill, or speake evill, or doe evill against thee. In this, O my soule, thou art not alone, 'twas the condition of thy Saviour; therefore mourne not, O my soule, but rejoyce, according to the divine rule, that thou art made like him. Thus the testimony of conscience concerning a mans sincerity, brings in matter of comfort and joy to the soule of man, in the midst of troubles, and makes it smile, when under heavy burthens of cruelty.

Lastly, it must needs be, that the testimony of conscience concerning the simplicity of a mans conversation, should minister joy in the midst of troubles, because such plainly see
K 4 their

their interest, in the divine word of consolation. *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoyce ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart, Psal. 32. 11.* Conscience now tels me that I am upright in heart; and that in simplicity and uprightness I have had my conversation in the world; and so consequently that joy here, as well as hereafter, belongs to me. Out of this reasoning, betweene conscience and the divine word of consolation, joy will breake forth in the soule first or last, lade. an upright man with what burthens you will. *Rejoyce all ye that are upright in heart,* saith God: thou art upright in heart, saith conscience to a sincere soule; and conscience will not stay here, but will presse upon the soule to apply his owne mercies; why then dost not thou rejoyce? Dost thou thinke it a small matter, to disobey a command of God? This pressing language of conscience, will make a sincere soule strive hard, and pray hard, to reioyce in afflictions for Christs sake, according to the divine rule, which prayer God will heare, and bring the upright

upright soule at last, to say in the midst of troubles, with these champions in my text, *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world.*

Having given you the point and the grounds of it, a word or two I would speake, by way of application, to you that are unsound, and then a word more to you that are sincere, and so conclude this point. This doctrine may in the first place serve to unfold a riddle, to you that are unsound. Possibly you may wonder, to see a man goe rejoycing to prison, and to fire and fagot, especially when cenured by learned men, for such and such a malefactor: you it may be thinke of such a man, as he of *Paul*, that he is mad and merry without cause, as bedlams are; or else that he laughs from the teeth outward, as he that would put a good face upon an ill matter. No, no, doe not iudge so uncharitably, it may be this man hath meat to eat, which ye know not of.

It

It may be he hath his conscience testifying within, that he hath walked in all uprightnesse, and is not such a one, as the world hath censured him to be; and this makes him reioyce, in the midst of all troubles. 'Twas wonderfull to *Nebuchadnezzar*, to see the three children walke in the fiery furnace, as if they had been walking in his stately walkes; because he was not aware that they had such a divine comfortable companion, as they had. So 'tis wonderfull to blind worldlings, to see men so chearfull in suffering for trifles in religion (as they call them) and the reason is, because they know not that divine comforter conscience, w^{ch} is continually within them, & unto them, a feast. This is to walke sincerely, to be tender to obey all Gods will, and this conscience tels the soule, in the midst of all the troubles he undergoes, from men of corrupt minds, and large consciences; and this language of conscience, being attended with the *glorious power of the holy Ghost*, as a comforter, this soule cannot but reioyce, though bleeding upon a Pillory, groaning upon a Racke,

Racke, dying upon a Crosse, and condemned by wise men for a foole, in standing out in such small matters.

Secondly, as this doctrine tells you blinde soules, the reason why some are so chearfull, under great troubles, for small things; so it tels you that are a little more growne in hypocrisie and wickednesse, that your designe against the godly is frustrate. The maine designe of the divell and his children, in all the troubles he puts them to, is, to deprive them of all ioy and comfort, & to make their being upon earth hell, which is a place without all consolation. Now this they can never doe, for as much as they cannot deprive them of the peace of conscience, and ioy of the holy Ghost, which goe hand in hand, in an upright heart. True it is, if all the ioy of the godly, did consist in outward things, as wicked mens ioy doth, then possibly they might serve the godly, as God will one day serve them, to wit, utterly strip them of all consolation; but the least part of an upright mans ioy, consists in externall things; his prime ioy is within, from conscience

ence, and the holy Ghost which keepe company alwaies with it; and these two, all the wicked men upon earth, nor all the Divels in Hell, cannot suspend, muchlesse silence from speaking comfort to an upright heart. Conscience will still say this within, that he which so walkes as before mentioned, is upright; when men and divels without, say, that he is an hypocrit, a dissembler, and not worthy to live. And the Holy Ghost will still second this language of conscience, by speaking over the same againe: in such glorious expressions, and with such sweetned words, will the spirit of God, beare witness with the spirit of man, that doe what you will to this man, he will still, notwithstanding all, rejoyce. Cast him into prison; nay, cast him into a dungeon, a dirty dungeon, as *Jeremies* was; nay, cast him into a fiery Furnace; into a fiery Furnace heat seven times hotter then ordinary, *Give his backe to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucke off the haire, as the Prophet speakes, Isa. 50. 6.* doe what you will to him, yet you will never deprive him of his joy. As
long

long as breath is in his nostrils, conscience will comfort him ; and when this is gone , by thy cruelty, he will be in fulnesse of joy ; and in the fuller, by how much the more cruelty thou hast inflicted on him. The joy of conscience, is proportioned to what we suffer, for conscience ; *as the afflictions of Christ, abound in us, so shall our joyes both here and hereafter.* And therefore doe not breake your sleepe and your braines, to plot mischief against the upright, for they will have more joy in suffering cruelty, then you can have in inflicting it. You doe but lessen your owne joy, to encrease theirs. The more terrible you are unto them, the more shall the testimony of conscience be attended, with a glorious Spirit of consolation, which will make them rejoyce and be *exceeding glad*, under all that you can inflict ; and this will exceedingly vex you.

Thirdly, this doctrine will acquaint you with this truth. That if conscioufnes of sincerity, will lessen and sweeten troubles, by giving joy to the upright in the midst of them ; conscioufnesse
of

of hypocrisie and unsoundnesse, must needs imbitter all troubles, and make them more pressing and piercing, upon you that are halters, and time-servers: this was that which *Jobs* friends drove at, in all their discourses with him, to bring him to sorrow doubly and trebly, for as much as all his outward miseries, were attended (as they conceived) with inward rottennesse: intimating, and that truly, that it must be so, and will be so with all hypocrits, when conscience is once thoroughly awakened, to tell them of their unsoundnesse, under afflictions. What a terrible sting will this be, to a man in poverty, when his conscience shall tell him. Thou hast shuffled and shifted basely to get wealth, and yet by all thy unjust waies, thou canst skarce keepe a cue above a begger. This blunt language of conscience, will be such an addition of sorrow to poverty, as will exceed the pressure of poverty, when at greatest. What a sting will this be to a man in disgrace, when his conscience shall tell him, Thou hast beene a time-server; one that hast studied to
humour

humour and please men, more then God, that thou mightest get honour, and keepe honour in the world, and yet for all thy dog-like fauning and flattering, thou stinkest in the nostrils of all, and art cast unto the dung-hill as unsavory salt. What a sting will this be to, a man in sicknesse and death, when his conscience shall tell him, that he hath beene but an out-side Christian, all the daies of his life; a man zealous about humane inventions and bodily exercises, to give God the out-side, and carelesse to worship God in spirit and truth: this close language of conscience, will paine a man more then any sicknesse, or death can doe. This was that which stung *Balaams* worse then death, that his conscience told him, he had beene but an hypocrit all his life. This made *Judas* hang himselfe, after he had sold his master for money, for as much as his conscience told him then strongly, that he had beene but an hypocriticall follower of Christ, from the first to the last. And thus would every rotten wretch doe or worse, in every little trouble,

trouble, if God should not admirably step in, and reſtraine and hinder, ſo terrible is the ſting of conſcience, when it teſtifies againſt a man, and ſuch deepe additions of griefe it bringeth to the ſoule, in every calamity. *Sharpe arrowes and coales of Iuniper*, conſcience ſhooteth and kindleth in the ſoule of man, in every trouble, when it teſtifieth againſt him, as the *Psalmiſt* uſeth the expreſſions, in relation to the hypocrit, the man concerning whom I here treat of, *Pſal.* 120.4.

Wherefore I would exhort all you, that are unſound at heart, to beg upright hearts at the hands of God, that you may walke uprightly, and ſo have the teſtimony of conſcience with you, to rejoyce you in all your troubles. You labour by hooke and by crooke to get wealth to ſtand by you, and to comfort you in troubles; and this will prove *gravel in your bellies* to torture you, as *Salomon* affirmeth, ſo farre will it be from comforting you in troubles. The teſtimony of conſcience concerning your ſincerity, is better then all the wealth in the world, to ſtand by you

you and to revive you in troubles. You flatter and faune, turne and wind, shuffle and shift, to get great men to be your friends to stand by you, and to comfort you in troubles; and alas! their favour is a vapour; as unconstant as the wind. Walke sincerely, and conscience will be a faithfull friend for you to the death; yea, after death, in judgement. If thou hadst the favour of all the Princes in the world, yet could not they procure for thee a dram of comfort in sicknes, in death, or in judgement: conscience in all these times can, and will procure for thee, not onely drams, but flaggons of consolation, if thou walke sincerely. Conscience is an incomparable friend, or foe, in sicknesse, death, and judgement.

The blindness and folly of man above all other creatures, is much to be wondred at; he hunts after things *which are not*, as *Salomon* saith, to be comforters to him, and takes no paines to procure that, which will indeed be stable and abiding comfort to him, in all states. Riches, and honours, and friends, all the things of this life, they

L

are

are called by *Solomon*, *things that are not*, because they are not such things, as the blind heart of man conceives them to be : he thinks they are sufficient to make him happy, and they are not so. The least fit of sicknesse, will *non-plus* all these things, for reviving the soule. Vaine man like that foole, thinks that he hath comfort enough for many yeares; that is, for all his life, when he hath great renewes in the world, and therefore sings a *requiem* to his soule, as if there needed no other thing, to the tranquillity of the Spirit, throughout a mans life, but worldly things; and alas! these things are not abiding, but still upon the wing, ready to flee from us; and if they were abiding, yet they are not satiffying; and therefore *Solomon* calls them *vanity and vexation*, to the Spirit. Conscience is a lasting friend, and a substantiall friend, to the spirit of man. A friend that hath such waters of life, which will revive the soule in the greatest extremities; and he is a fountaine made by God, that will never wax dry; So that the soule, as long as
she

she keepes her selfe sincere, shall never be without a spring of joy, boiling up day and night, within her.

And this joy is not a low prised commodity, a thing little worth : 'tis called in Scripture, a *joy of the Lord*, such a joy of God, as is the *strength* of man. When the Levits had opened the Law unto the people, their consciences were awakened, and smote them so, that they *wept*, saith the text, and weakened and unfitted themselves, for the duties of the day ; and therefore the Levits were faine to comfort them, that conscience might take hold on something, to worke joy in them, which is the strength of the soule, unto the duty of thanksgiving, which was the speciall worke of that day. As an accusing condemning conscience, secretly consumes spirits and strength of soule and body ; and when attended onely with a legall spirit, begets such a horrid grieve in the heart of man, as unfits for the highest and noblest service of God : So an acquitting conscience, doth exhilarate and revive the soule ; and as being attended with an evangelicall

licall spirit, begets such a joy in the heart, as tunes & strengthens it, unto all divine duties, especially unto thanksgiving, which is the highest & hardest divine lesson, that can be played upon the heart of fallen man, but makes the sweetest melody in the eares of God, of all divine lessons committed to man, to learne. If thou then wouldst be a sweet singer in *Israel*, a man apt and able to that which God most loves, walke so that conscience may still be an acquitter within thee: if this accuse and condemne thee, 'twill put every string in thy heart out of tune; consume thy spirits, & make thy living a continuall dying, & yet death undesirable.

Secondly, divine joy is called in Scripture an *exceeding joy*. *I am exceeding jayfull in all our tribulations*, saith Paul, 2 Cor. 7. 4. The joy which conscience gives to an upright man in all tribulations for uprightnesse sake, is an exceeding joy; a joy that doth farre more take, content, and delight the soule, then any other joy can doe: so the Apostle explaines this clause, by that which goes before it in the same
verse

verse. *I am [filled] with comfort* (saith he) *I am exceeding joyfull in all our tribulations.* Conscience gives such a joy to the soule in tribulations, that fills the soule with comfort, which is more then all the sweets and delights of this world can doe. The delights of this life they doe not reach the soule of man; they reach no further then the externall senses, so farre are they from filling the soule with comfort; and yet they doe not fill nor satisfie these neither: for the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the eare with hearing, nor the nose with smelling, nor the tongue with tasting, nor the hand with handling. 'Tis but a tiring, and not a satisfying joy, that all outward things bring to the outward senses. That joy which onely the externall senses bring into the soule, *Salomon* calls *madnesse*, as not worthy of the name of joy, because it reaches not the spirit of man as rationall, but as meerely sensitive. The joy which conscience brings into the soule, doth not barely reach the soule, but it fills it and satisfies it. *My soule shall be satisfied as with marrow and*

fatnesse, & my mouth shall praise thee with joyfull lips; when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate upon thee in the night watches, Psal. 63. 5. 6. If thou wilt live all thy daies, with the joy of a bruit, with a meere sensuall outside, spiritlesse, vaine, vexing joy, then thou needs not take paines to order thy conversation sincerely, to get thy conscience to testifie wth thee; but if thou wouldst live all thy daies in the joy of a man that beares the Image of God, then must thou strive so to walke, that conscience may beare witnes that thou art sincere.

The Scripture doth not stay here, but calls divine joy *everlasting*; which is an attribute so high, that it leads us necessarily to the originall, to wit, God, who is everlasting. As hell is a place of everlasting sorrow to all that be in it, because a river of Brimstone from an everlasting fountaine, runnes to it; so heaven which is begun in joy upon earth, to wit, in the hearts of the upright, 'tis everlasting; because fresh streames of consolation continually come from an everlasting fountaine, to wit, God. God alwaies seconds con-

science

science in him that is sincere, with such a *glorious power* as Saint Paul calls it, that though he be alwaies in sorrowes for Christs sake, yet he is alwaies rejoycing: *As sorrowfull, yet alwaies rejoycing*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. You may many waies cause sorrow to an upright man, but yet joy will live in all, and outlive all his sorrowes. You may set on fire the body of an upright man, and consume that; but you can never set on fire his joy and consume that. You may various waies kill a sincere man, but you can no way kill his joy, as long as he holds fast his integrity. The joy that conscience gives to the soule of man, upon testimony of his sincerity, 'twill live in fire, 'twill live in water, 'twill live in this land, 'twill live in any land; famine cannot starve it, plague cannot infect it, the sword cannot murther it, the racke cannot teare it; 'tis very healthy, 'tis long-lived, 'twill never die: 'tis from heaven, and will abide with the soule untill he come to heaven; and then will be consummated, to give full solace to the soule for ever. If then thou wouldst have joy

to sticke by thee, in health, in sickness, in peace, in warre, in plenty, in famine, in honour, in disgrace, in liberty, in bonds, in life, in death, and eternally after death, walke so that thy conscience may say that thou art simple and sincere in thy conversation.

The Scripture stayes not here, but calls divine joy *unspeakeable and full of glory*. As that joy which just men made perfect inherit, is beyond conception, so that it cannot enter into the heart of man to conceive of it, so that joy which conscience gives to upright men in troubles, 'tis beyond expression: the tongue of man cannot fully expresse it. I doe not affirme that the heart of man cannot fully conceive it, though possibly it may be so. 'Tis joy unspeakeable strong: stronger and more vehement, then the joy of worldlings, when Corn and Wine and Oyle increase; and yet 'tis hard to expresse how much joy an earthy heart hath, in great earthly increase. 'Tis joy unspeakeable
sweet,

sweet; so that he which tastes of this joy, tastes no more sweetnesse in sensuall things, then in the white of an egge: 'tis sweeter then the Honey or the Honey-combe: that is, sweeter and more pleasing to the soule, then all the delights of this life, to the carnall heart; and yet 'tis hard to expresse, how sweet and pleasing sensuall delights are, to the carnall heart of man.

'Tis joy unspeakeable pure: as *David* saith, that *the feare of the Lord is cleane*; so I may say, that the joy of the Lord, which he gives to man upon the testimony of conscience concerning his sincerity, 'tis cleane; that is, 'tis pure, unspeakeable pure, and holy. What was said of the generation of Christ, that may be said of the generation of divine joy. *Who can declare his generation?* saith the Scripture of Christ; so may I say, Who can declare the generation of divine joy? 'Tis begotten in the heart, as Christ was in *Maries* wombe, to wit, by the holy Ghost: 'tis shead abroad in the heart, by the holy Ghost: 'tis continually nourish-

nourished and cherished by the holy Ghost. It fills the heart full of holy thoughts, the mouth full of holy words, and the hand full of holy deeds. It is immediately from heaven, and makes a man have his conversation in heaven, whilst on earth.

'Tis joy unspeakably precious: a dramme of it is more worth then the world: a damned soule in hell would give ten thousand worlds, if there were so many, for the least droppe of this cooling comforting liquor, to aswage his scorching torments, but for a moment. It hath heaven in it, with which what can be compared for worth? *'Tis joy unspeakable, and full of glory.* The smiling face of God, which is more glorious then the Sunne, may be seene in it, so diaphanous is it.

'Tis joy unspeakably lasting: whereas all other joyes die when man dies, if not long before; this joy lives, as long as the soule and God lives. Labour then so to live, that conscience may testifie before God and you, that you are sincere, and so leade your
soules

soules into that unspeakeable joy, which will make you unspeakeably happy.

I have now a word or two to you which walke sincerely and uprightly in this world, & so I shut up this point. If you doe not yet finde experimentally, the truth of this point ; to wit, your consciences causing you to rejoyce in the midst of your troubles, by alively testifying your integrity to you, then by prayer plead your integrity to God, and intreat him so transcendently to second conscience, with his glorious power which worketh in us, that your hearts may be revived under every presture for pieties sake. Thus David was forc'd to doe sometimes, to wit, pleade his integrity, to finde the benefit of it in troubles ; for God will be sought unto for every good thing, though we be never so sincere. *Let integrity and uprightnesse preserve me : for I waite on thee, Psal. 25. 21.* David you see was put to it, to plead his integrity to God, to obtaine the benefit of it in troubles ; and thus must we still doe if we finde our hearts
to

to droope in troubles, although we are conscious to our selves of our upright and innocent conversation. Say, Lord thou knowest that I have walked uprightly as concerning this thing and that, about which I am troubled, and therefore doe thou stand up in my heart, and second my conscience by the Almighty power of thy holy Spirit, and make it speak peace so lively and so gloriously within mee, that I may rejoyce in this tribulation for thy sake; that I may finde my integrity, as a cordiall to me, to keepe me from fainting in my mind, and from stretching out tongue or hand to iniquity.

If you finde the comfortable testimony of conscience, reviving and rejoycing you in your troubles, then blesse God with *David*, that he hath enabled you so to walk in this wretched world, as to have the voice of conscience with you, that you are sincere. 'Tis of God that we walk uprightly a moment: did not he stand by us, and watch over our deceitfull hearts, and uphold our goings in his paths, wee should shew our selves hypocritically wretches

wretches in all our wayes. *God is my strength and power; and hee maketh my way perfect*, Psal. 28. 32. When the lively testimony of conscience, concerning *Dauids* integrity, had rejoyced, and raised his dull spirit, then he took wing, and made his soule mount up to heaven like an Eagle, to magnifie God which had beene such strength and power to him, as to make his way perfect, that is, sincere, and so capable of deliverance from his insulting enemies, [*God*] *is my strength and power; and [he] maketh my way perfect*. David would not appropriate the praise, of his upright and innocent conversation to himselfe, as if he by his own wisdom, strength and goodnesse, had made his way perfect, and upright; he had through experience of the rottenesse of his owne heart, and his aptnesse to declare it, if God had not beene a speciall strength and aide unto him, in his conversation; and therefore doth he so humbly and imitably say, [*God*] *is my strength and power; and [he] maketh my way perfect*. 2 Sam. 22. 33. he enabled me so to walke, as to be capable of

of the accomplishment of his promises of defence against, and victory over ungodly men, and no wisdom, strength, or goodness of his own. Thus let us humbly do; when we feel our hearts leape within us, as rejoiced by the secret testimony of conscience, concerning the integrity of our carriage, in this or that matter of weight and triall that we were put upon; Thou wast my wisdom, strength, and power, O God, to guide and enable me to walke uprightly in such and such hazardous matters; my heart is deceitfull, and full of base feare, and if thou hadst not stood up as a mighty God in my weake spirit, I had beene over-borne with fleshly feares, and selfe-respects, to the wounding of my integrity, and thy Gospell and glory: blessed be thy name, that didst enable me to looke over all by ends, to thy glory; and to acquit my selfe, at the time of triall, answerable to my upright purpose and resolution: 'tis of thee to will and to doe good, and unto thee I give all the glory. This is the good way to have God stand by

us still, and so mightily to guide us in all our waies, that we shall keepe faith and a good conscience to our grave, and so consequently our joy, which is the life of our lives. This was upright *Jobs* sweet carriage, as we may guesse by his language. *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soule: I would despise my life.* If I were for holinesse, as just men made perfect in glory, yet whilst a soule so holy, is in a body so diseased, I could not take any pleasure in my life. Thus to interpret these words, is to give us a hint and more, that *Job* was extreamely overgone with impatience under Gods hand, which is the worst that can be said upon this place: I thinke there may be hinted this unto us (if the other be the maine scope) that *Job* saw all the integrity and uprightness he had, or possibly could be had, was from God, and that he had no reason to boast, and magnifie himselfe, what ever his endowments were.

Lastly, if you finde by comfortable experience the truth of my doctrine, that the testimony of conscience concerning

cerning your sincerity, causeth joy and rejoycing in our soules, then hang upon God for perseverance in a sincere way, that your joy may abide, and still more and more increase, as the light of the Sunne unto the perfect day. You have tasted of the sweetnesse of a sincere way, and therefore you should zelously follow God, to keepe you on in it, as long as breath is in your nostrils, that you may never loose your grapes, your first-fruits of the holy Land, your taste of heaven, untill you come to the full fruition of it. 'Twas *Dauids* prayer often (and let it be yours) though he were sincere, that *God would make his heart sound in his statutes*. There is much rottennesse in the best heart, and this will breake forth in a mans life, to the dishonour of God, and the wounding of his conscience, and robbing of his joy, if he be not still with *David*, hanging upon God by prayer, for more and more uprightnesse, and for further and further cleansing of an unsound heart. Things that are apt to bend and become crooked, we are every foote rectifying

rectifying and straightning them, and labouring to strengthen them, so that they may abide straight, and so be still fit for use and service. You know to what to apply this, if I should not tell you, to the heart of man. Flattery or violence will turne you aside, from your sincere walking, if you doe not humbly seeke God still with *David*, to make your heart sound in his statutes, and to be still with you, to uphold your steps in his paths. You will ship wracke conscience, and all the peace and joy you have by it quickly, as *Peter* did, if you grow confident of your owne strength, and doe not feare alwaies, and depend upon your God, for ability, to doe every thing uprightly. And therefore leane not to your owne understanding, as *Salomon* said to his sonne, nor to any parts else you have, to steere your conversation, if you would maintaine the integrity and uprightness of it; but renounce all in your selves, and begge God to make you runne and not be weary, and to deliver you from backsliding in heart and life, to make you faithfull

M

to

to the death, and to give you at last the crowne of life.

This counsell that you may carefully follow, thinke on these two or three things. The peace and joy of a good conscience, is better then the greatest preferment in the world, and the losse of it, is worse then the losse of thy life, in the cruel'st way that man can invent. Thou wilt loose a little heaven, and create within thy heart a little hell, which will last till the marrow of thy bones be consumed, and thy moisture turned into the drought of sommer, in the day that thou turnest aside from thy sincere course, and setst conscience against thee. The joy of an acquitting conscience, is unspeakable and full of glory: and so the sorrow of an accusing condemning conscience, is unspeakable and full of terrour.

'Tis sorrow unspeakeable strong. What God said to the woman, after she had turned aside from the upright way of the Lord, that may I say of all the seed of the woman, when once they turn aside from their upright conversation.

verſation. *Unto the woman God ſaid, I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow*, Gen. 3. 16. Sorrow multiplied, is to have ſorrow upon ſorrow, as Paul uſeth the expreſſion to the Philippians. As in child-bearing there is pang upon pang; and theſe returns of pangs, grow ſtill ſtronger and ſtronger, till the wombe be diſcharged of her burthen: ſo ſay I to you, in the day that you turne aſide from upright walking, God will greatly multiply your ſorrow; you ſhall have ſorrow upon ſorrow, pang upon pang by an accuſing conſcience; and theſe pangs ſhall ſtill be ſtronger and ſtronger, till you have humbled your ſoules throughly for your halting, and got your conſciences ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt.

The ſorrowes which God diſtributeth to his, when they turne aſide from ſincere walking, they are ſorrowes fetcht from hell, and thoſe ſorrowes, of all ſorrowes, are the ſtrongeſt. *The ſorrowes of hell compaſſed me*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt. To turne aſide from uprightneſſe and holineſſe, was the practice of the evill angels, for whom hell was

M 2

fiſt

Phil. 2. 27.

first founded, and therefore God doth borrow some sorrowes from thence, to punish such sinnes in his children, which carry a neere similitude to their sinne: that *similes vitio*, may be *similes supplicio*; like in sinne, may be like in punishment. The sorrowes which God inflicteth upon revolvers, for similitude sake, are called the sorrowes of hell.

The sorrowes of hell God distributeth in anger, as *Job* saith. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? and oft cometh their destruction upon them: God distributeth sorrowes in his anger. Job 21. 17.* So the sorrowes which God distributeth to his people, when they turne aside from their sincere walking, are from God, as with an angry frowning visard upon his face, as if he were indeed very angry, as indeed he is with the sinne, though not with the person of the godly; for he hates sinne in all, with a perfect hatred. The sorrowes which God will distribute to thee by accusing conscience, when thou haltest, shall be such as in which thou shalt see nothing, but the angry face

face of God, and this will make thee tremble & sorrow, as the Lord speakes of the Babylonians. *Jer.* 51. 29. as the very damned in hell doe, as one that feeleth the very sorrowes of hell to compasse thee. God looking angerly upon the earth, it trembleth, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 104. 32. The earth is the vastest and gravest body under Heaven, and therefore least apt to shaking; & the foundations of it were laid, by Gods owne immediat hand; and yet if God doe but looke angerly upon this firme stable body, so transcendently founded, it trembleth: how much more then needs must man, which is but a little dust of that grave vast body, shake and tremble, when God as an angry God lookes upon him?

Secondly, the sorrowes of hell are such as principally torture the spirit. The fire which we make, can onely burne and torture the bodies of men; because this onely of man is materiall: immaterials, as the soules of men are, our fire cannot fasten upon: but that *strange fire*, which God hath kindled

M 3

in

*Ignis facialis
in material.
non enim
quit p' b' lo-
coph.*

in hell, for all that disobey him, burnes the soules of men, though immateriall substances. Nay, so strange is that fire, that it burnes these immateriall substances most fiercely, as being the most sinfull part of man; for 'tis onely sinne that pitches and defiles the soule, and makes it combustible, which otherwise would never burne, if all the fiery artists of hell did blow the bellows. Now, just such is that fire, which conscience kindles upon the breach of integrity; to wit, a fire that principally tortures the spirit of man: a fire that burnes inwardly, and consumes the marrow of the bones, and drinks up the spirits. The arrowes which conscience shootes in upon a man, upon the breach of sincerity, are such as pierce principally the spirit. As long as *Iob* was patient under Gods hand, he felt the arrowes of the Almighty onely without him, as I may say, to wit, in his body, in his children and substance; but when he brake out and cursed his day, he presently complains, that he felt the arrowes of God within him, & that the poison of
them

them did drinke up his spirits. *Iob 6.4.* All that which before he felt without, was nothing to that which he now felt within, upon his spirit; as the torments which damned wretches shall suffer in their bodies, are nothing to those which shall continually flee up and downe, within their soules. So *David* after he had made breaches in his integrity, God filled his loines with loathsome diseases, but this was nothing to speake of; God made things strike into his heart, and then he roared. *I am feeble and sore broken, I have roared by reason of the [disquietnesse of my heart.]* *David* felt paines gather about his heart, and then he cries out. The heart is the marke that God principally aimes at, when a Christian hath turned aside from his upright course: other outward parts he may hit and deeply wound, but this is but to make holes into the heart, where the seat of unsoundnesse that principally offends him is. The fire which conscience kindles, it may flash forth into the eyes, and tongue, and hands, and make a man looke fearefully, speake desperately,

ratly, and doe bloodily against the body; but the heate of the fire is principally within, in the furnace, in the spirit; 'tis but some sparkles and flashes onely, that you see come forth at the lower holes of the Furnace, which you behold in the eyes, words, and deeds of such men.

Thirdly, the sorrowes of hell are torturing, but yet not such as utterly consume and end the soule. The fire which we make, let it fasten on never so hard a thing, yet it will consume it in length of time. But that strange fire that God hath kindled in hell for all that disobey him, though it burne with the greatest fiercenesse that can be conceived, yet it never consumes the soules of those that are now burned in it; no nor yet the bodies that shall hereafter be burned in it. Damned soules are ever burning, and yet never burned; ever a consuming, and yet never consumed; and this addes infinitely to the misery of the damned. Even such is that fire which conscience kindles in the soule of man, upon the breach of integrity. 'Tis a fire that will

will burne and torture the soule day and night, but never consume it. *He-man* complains that this fire burnt so fiercely in his soule, that it *distracted* his spirit, but yet did not end his spirit. *While I suffer thy terror I am distracted,* *Psal.* 88. 15. The terrours that conscience kindles in the spirit, will racke the spirit, rend and teare limme from limme, taculty from faculty, and make the spirit mad with horreur and anguish, but yet for all this not put a period to the spirit: he shall be as susceptible and as sensible of tortures to day as yester-day, and to-morrow as to day, and next weeke as this weeke, next yeere as this yeere, the last day of his life, as the first day they begun, if God doe not admirably intercept. Conscience hangs the soule in chaines alive, upon the breach of integrity; and there lets the soule beate himselfe, bite and gnaw himselfe, but yet cannot when he would end himselfe, and this makes every torture double. O that I might have my request! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Why what *Iob* dost thou long for?

Why

Why, *even that it would please God to destroy me: that he would let loose his hand and cut me off.* No *Iob*, your spirit has hanged but a while, 'tis not dead yet, and therefore it shall not be cut down. The things that *Jobs* soule refused to touch, were made by conscience his daily sorrowfull meate, and this Gall and Wormwood fretted his guts, but did not strangle and end him; conscience forc'd him every day, and every night to drinke a new draught, that kept his Spirit in continuall torture, and yet he could not get his soule out of this body, nor have it consumed in. The terrours that conscience kindles they are so terrible, that they will make a man wish for death, nay inflict death upon himselfe, and all to put an end unto them, and yet all will not doe, because these tortures fasten upon the Spirit, but destroy not the Spirit.

Finally, the sorrowes of hell, they are such as are not in the least measure pittied by God. Though the damned in hell, be tormented with sulfurous flames, which is a very fierce fire; and though

thou
yell,
nual
God
nay,
hear
God
dolo
year
wor
whic
upor
seem
sure
spir
affrig
God
look
and f
fastin
love,
in the
hold
Henc
of G
Will
be fav
gone

though they cry and roare, howle and yell, shrich and gnash the teeth continually, and all this in the hearing of God continually, which would stirre, nay, turne the bowels of any man, to heare but a moment; yet it stirres not God a jot, though he hath heard these dolorous cries so many hundred yeares, to give them the least good word, or good looke. So that sorrow which conscience raises in the soule, upon the breach of sincerity, God seemes not to pittie in the least measure, for a long time. Though the spirit of man be rackt, tortured and affrighted even unto distraction, yet God will not so much as afford a good looke to the soule. Though he pray and fast, and consume himselfe with fasting, yet not any beame of light and love, that the revolting soule shall see in the countenance of God, to take hold on, and to comfort himselfe by. Hence 'tis that the Psalmist complains of God and his mercy as cleane gone. *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy cleane gone for ever? doth his promise faile for ever-*

evermore? *Psal.* 77. 7, 8. Nay, many times God serves back-sliding Christians, as he served the Israelites of old, to wit, increaseth their sorrow, when they are in earnest suit for release and comfort; so farre he is from pittying of them: and as *Ioseph* carried himselfe to his brethren; instead of pittying them in their want, he spake affrightingly to them, and told them that they were spies, and so put them in feare of the losse of their lives. Just thus for a time doth God usually carry himselfe to revolting Christians: he is so farre from pittying them, notwithstanding all their prayers, that he calls them dogges, and speakes roughly to them, and puts them in feare of the losse of their best lives, and seemes resolved to proceed against them as his enemies, begge and cry as long as they will. *Job* points at this, where he saith, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?* *Iob* 13. 24. And is not this hell indeed, to be in soule misery, and to have no compassion from God? To be pittied and condoleled by a mans friend, though he be not
able

able to helpe him, we take it as a great mercy, and moderation of misery; *Iob* would so have accounted it. But when such as we take for friends, doe not onely forbear to pity, but set themselves against us in our misery, and adde to our afflictions; this makes misery unspeakeably miserable, and a lively Embleme of Hell indeed: But I goe no further this way.

Secondly, as the sorrow which conscience causeth upon the breach of sincerity, is unspeakeable strong, no other in a manner but the torments of hell; so 'tis oftentimes unspeakable sudden. As the Wind raises hideous stormes and tempests at Sea on a sudden, that endangers the drowning of all: So conscience, when once the soule hath turned aside to crooked waies, oftentimes of a sudden raises hideous storms and tempests in the soule, which addes exceedingly to the torture. Horrour and terrour breaking forth suddenly, affrights more by farre, then if it came with warning. The fire that conscience kindles in the soule,

is

is like the setting a fire of Gun-powder, very sudden, as 'tis very fierce. After once a breach is made upon sincerity, conscience laies traines of wild-fire, and blowes up all a mans joy on an instart, and sets on fire the soule, and then lets in legions of such spirits whose dwelling is onely in fire to keep Garrison against all promises of good to this soule, and then the soule becomes like *Tashur*, *feare round about*: the face of God terrible; the face of friends terrible; the thought of sickness, death; and the thought of death, hell; and the thought of hell, as at the doore, and unavoidable. As the Arrowes which God will shoot, against the enemies of his Church, shall goe forth as lightening, *Zech. 9. 14.* so the Arrowes which God shootes by conscience, against such as turne aside to evill waies, they goe forth oft-times as lightnings, very sudden, & very swift. Sometimes when a sinner like *Belsazar* is in the very act of sinne, conscience writes downe a mans doome in his heart, and in such legible letters, that the sinner cannot choose but read
and

and tremble. When a sinner is taking pleasure in unrighteousnesse, of a sudden conscience breaks forth into thundering and lightning in the soule, and the sinner is as one descending quicke into hell. *And [immediately while he yet spake] the Cocke crew, and the Lord look'd backe upon Peter, saith the text, Luke 22. 60.* On a sudden, while *Peter* was in the very act of denying, a cocke crew within, to wit, conscience that made *Peters* spirit die within him. Once and twise *Peter* denied Christ, and Christ did not awaken conscience, and set him at him, to pull him by the throat; but the third time, *immediately while he yet spake*, conscience like a Lyon ranne upon his soule, and made him beleeeve, that hee would be a tormentour to him, as he is to the damned, before the time. Sometime conscience may let a man alone, after he is turned aside from sincere walking, but if the soule still goe on, of a sudden conscience will break forth, into thundering and lightning so fiercely as he did in *Peters* soule, on whom if Christ had not look'd backe, *Peter* would have

have gone neere, to have served himselfe as *Indas*, after he had betrayed his Master.

To conclude all, This I am sure, O sincere soule, that as conscience will make thee know to thy comfort, that 'tis a sweet thing faithfully and sincerely to serve God; so conscience will make thee know to thy griefe, that it is an evill and a bitter thing, to turne away from the good way of the Lord. Having therefore now set good and evill before thee, make a wise choyce. Chuse rather to undergoe any thing, that man or divell can invent, that thou maist still enjoy the peace and joy of a good conscience, then to have the greatest honour this world will afford, and shipwracke sincerity, and so lie liable to the lash of an evill conscience.

FINIS.



For



there
the de
to be
and sh
the C



2 C O R. I. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards: but specially amongst you.

THe fourth and last proposition, which now according to order and method, comes to be handled, is this, *That there be speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, which ought to be observed, and answerably to declare and shew our selves.* The Church of the Corinthians was very vitious in
N doctrine

doctrine and manners, as we may plainly see by many expressions of Saint *Paul*, in his first and second Epistle to them. They were *a* contentious, and *b* puffed up one against another. They had itching eares, and carnally gloried in men; one was for *c Paul*, and another for *Apolla*, and another for *Cephas*. They were voluptuous; so voluptuous, that before they came to the Lords Supper, one was hungry, another *d* drunken, in the House of God. They were followers of heathenish fashions, as in their apparell and meates, so in their haire, wearing it so long that verry nature, and the custome of the Church of Christ condemned it. They were *f* superstitious, *g* idolatrous, *h* adulterous, fornicatours, abusers of themselves with man-kind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, murderers, *i* contempters of Christ; & backbiters, whisperers, raisers of tumults, and what not? This grosse wickedness made *Paul* to stirre up the grace of God in him, and to use great boldness of speech, towards this Church, as him-

a 1 Cor. 1.

11.

b 1 Cor. 4.

6.

c 1 Cor. 1.

12.

d 1 Cor. 11.

11.

e 1 Cor. 11.

14, 16.

f 1 Cor. 10.

25.

g 1 Cor. 10.

14.

h 1 Cor. 6.

9, 10, 11.

i 1 Cor. 10.

9, 10.

k 1 Cor. 12.

10.

himselfe saith, 2 Cor. 7. 4. with all plainenesse and powerfullnesse, reproving their sinnes, and making manifest the truth, to every mans conscience, in the sight of God. They were grown so loose, that *Paul* was forc'd to use such *u* sharpe and home expressions, and with such majesty, as you shall not finde him the like, to any Church. Twise in one Epistle useth he this upbraiding expression, *" I speake this to your shame*, which not once throughout all his Epistles, to any other Church, doth he use the like upbraiding language. And then delivering his reproofes, with such a transcendent majesty. *Moreover I call God for a record upon my soule that to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth.* 2 Cor. 1. 23. As if he would dart their soules through, with such an holy feare of God, that their loose hearts for ever after, might stand in awe and sin not. Thus as this Church above all other, gave Saint *Paul*, speciall occasion for the declaration of his uprightnesse and sincerity, so answerably hee couragiously applied himselfe unto them, which is the mea-

N 2

ning

12 Cor. 4.
2.

2 Cor.
13. 10

2 Cor 5.
6.

1 Cor. 15.
34.

ning of this expression in my text, *but more abundantly to you-ward, or, specially among you.*

Paul had dealt sincerely with all other Churches, but other Churches were not so openly wicked, and therefore there needed not, that he should use such open majesticall contestation with them. This Church of *Corinth*, was very openly and wilfully wicked, and therefore *Paul* answerably opened his mouth against them. *O Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged: ye are not straightned in us, but ye are straightned in your owne bowels, 2 Cor. 6. 11.* We have said enough and done enough (as if the Apostle had said) to worke upon your profane hearts, and to turne you from your profane lives, but yet your affections are straightned and clogg'd, that you come not off so readily, to follow our holy instructions as you should. The point you see to be very naturally raised, *That there be speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, which we ought to observe, and answerably to declare, and shew our selves in our places.*

Speciall

Speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity, are either *personall*, *domesticall*, *sociall*, or *nationall*. Personall occasions, which require sincerity after a speciall manner to be declared, are when a man is strongly assaulted by the world, the flesh or the divell, to sinne against God; or else strongly hindred in seeking the glory of God, and the good of his Church. When *Simon* the forcerer saw, that through laying on of the Apostles hands, the holy Ghost was given, he offered *Peter* money to impart his skill unto him, and so to have made him a Merchant of the holy Ghost, for gaine; then was a speciall personall occasion from the world, for *Peter* to declare his sincerity, that he abhorred all unjust waies to get wealth, and that he was not mercenary in his Ministry, as the world might suppose; which he wisely considered, and answerably carried himsele. *Peter* stood up, and couragiously said to *Simon* the forcerer, *Thy money perish with thee; because that thou thoughtst the gift of God may be purchased with money, thou hast neither*

part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickednesse, and pray God if perhaps the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee; for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness & bonds of iniquity, Acts 8. 18, 19, 20, 21. When Samuel was thought hardly of, the people being strongly set to have a King, as other Nations had, not liking their government by Judges; then was a speciall personall occasion from the world, for Samuel to declare his integrity, that he had walked faithfully as Gods Vicegerent over them, and had given them no just occasion, to waxe weary of this way of government, and so consequently that they did evill to desire a King. And Samuel said to all Israel, behold here I am, witnesse against me before the Lord and before his Annoyned: whose Oxe have I taken? Whose Assse have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you, 1 Sam. 12. 2. When Barjesus withstood Paul in his Ministry, that

he

he could not doe that good he would upon *Sergius Paulus*, then was a speciall personall occasion from the world, for *Paul* to declare his sincerity, that he strongly abhorred flatterers and time-servers, and dearly loved the glory of God, & the winning of soules unto him; which he wisely considered, and answerably with courage declared himselfe *Thensaul* who also is called *Paul*, filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes ore him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the diuell, thou enemy of all righteousnesse, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right waies of the Lord? *Act.* 13. 9, 10.

When *Paul* was strongly set upon by his owne flesh; when the law in his members, rebelled against the law of his mind, and carried him captive to the law of sinne; then was a speciall personall occasion from the flesh, for *Paul* to declare his sincerity, that he loved God more then his lusts, and to please him, rather then to enjoy the pleasures of sinne; which he wisely considered, and answerably declared himselfe. *But I keepe under my body, and bring it*

into subjection, least that by any means when I have preached to others, I myselfe should be a cast-away. 1 Cor. 9.27. This is after a speciall manner to declare sincerity indeed, when a man courageously fights against himselfe, so farre-forth as sinfull, and opposite to God. The lusts of the heart, are the enemies of a mans owne house, which are the worst enemies of all, and therefore when these begin to warre and rebell, against that holy light which is in our minds, then is a speciall time indeed for a man to stirre up the grace of God in him, and to declare his uprightnesse for God, whose throne the heart of man ought to be, or else God will give up the heart to the power and dominion of sinne, and then the soule is undone for ever. This Paul wisely considered, and therefore when he felt this pricke in the flesh, after a speciall manner molested him, he still after a speciall manner declared his uprightnesse in wrestling against it, that so he might subdue his flesh, which otherwise would have subdued his spirit, and outed Christ of his prime

2 Cor. 12.7

Hold

Hold, and Saint *Paul* of his prime happiness.

When the divell tempted Christ, to cast downe himselfe from the top of a steepe place, and to fall downe and worship him, and so to decline his Father utterly; then was a speciall personall occasion from the divell, for Christ to declare his uprightnesse; that he prized every title of his fathers will, above all this world, and all the honours and pleasures in it. Which Christ wisely considered, and answerably with much courage and resolution declared himselfe. *Then said Iesus unto him, get thee hence Satan, for it is written, that thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely thou shalt serve, Math. 4.10.* So when the Serpent subtilly got into one of the followers of Christ, and prayed him to pittie and spare himselfe, from that painefull worke on which the glory of God, and the salvation of man so much depended; then was a speciall personall occasion from the divell, for Christ againe to declare his sincerity, that he more regarded the glory of God, and the

3

the good of man, then his owne life, though his life were worth a thousand fours; which he thorowly considered and answerably declared himselfe; *Get thee behind me satan, Mark. 8. 33.* So when the serpent subtilly set upon our first parents, to draw them to eate of the forbidden fruit, then was a speciall personall occasion from the divell. for them to have declared their uprightnesse; that they would not disobey their God in the least point, though they might have beene made Gods themselves, to doe it: which because they did not seriously consider, and answerably carry themselves, they lost the confirmation of their happy being, and plunged themselves, and all us their posterity, into unspeakeable misery.

Domesticall occasions which require sincerity after a speciall manner to be declared, are, when in family relations, good or evill, after a speciall manner is to be conversant about. When *Ely's* sonnes abused their high calling, by a profane conversation; then was a speciall domesticall occasion, for *Ely* to declare

declare his sincerity, to God and man, that he loved the glory of God, above the lives of his sonnes; which because he did not seriously observe and answerably carry himselfe, but passed over a speciall occasion, with an ordinary reproofe, therefore God fell out with him, and punished him as one that esteemed and loved his sonnes, more then God. When God commanded *Abraham* to sacrifice his onely sonne *Isaac*, then was a speciall domesticall occasion for *Abraham* to declare his sincerity, that to obey the Will of God, was dearer to him then the life of his onely sonnes; which he seriously considered, and answerably carried himselfe; and God then openly confessed *Abraham* to be upright. *For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy sonne, thine onely sonne from me Gen. 22. 12.* When *Iob's* wife bid *Iob* in his extremity to curse God and die then was a speciall domesticall occasion, for *Iob* to declare his sincerity, that he served God for nought; which *Iob* seriously considered, and answerably carried

ried himself towards his wife. *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh, what? shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evill?* Job 2. 10. So when *David Sauls* sonne had a speciall advantage against *Saul*, and might have slaine him, but would not, because he was the Lords Annoynted; then was a speciall domesticall occasion for *David*, to declare his uprightnesse to God and to *Saul*, that he was an obedient sonne to *Saul*, and desired not the life or Kingdome of his father, but to live in love and peace with him; which *David* wisely considered, and tooke this speciall occasion to declare his integrity to *Saul*; and this done so seasonably, his words were to *Saul* like Apples of gold in pictures of silver, which made him to confesse *David*, to be more righteous then himselfe, 1 *Sam.* 24. 17. So likewise when God met *Moses* in an Inne, and commanded him to circumcise his sonne, to which bloody ordinance *Zipporah* was so averse, or otherwise he should loose his life, then was a speciall domesticall occasion for *Moses* to declare his upright-

rightnesse to God and to his wife, that he regarded more to please God then to please his wife; which *Moses* seriously considered, and answerably with courage carried himselfe, or else he had assuredly smarted severely.

Sociall or *Symmachicall* occasions and times, for the declaration of sincerity after a speciall manner, are, when good or evill are more then ordinarily conversant about in relation to such or such a Society or Corporation. When *Ioab* that bloody man, would have destroyed *Abel* that ancient City, because of *Sheba* a seditious man which fled thither, then was a speciall symmachicall occasion for that wise woman to declare her uprightnesse, for her owne good, and for the good of that City whereof she was a member; that she was none of them that made strife and contention against *David*, nor that City in which she lived; which she wisely considered, and answerably with wisdom and courage carried herselfe. *I am one of them that are peaceable in Israel; thou seekest to destroy a City, and a mother in Israel; why*

3

why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord. 2 Sam. 20. 19. When Judas one of that honourable society, plotted mischief against Christ, the Master of that company, then was a speciall time for Christ to declare his integrity, that the world might know, that Christ had given Judas no just cause, thus treacherously to behave himselfe, but had every way so carried himselfe towards him, as might have beene enough, to have won any mans heart for ever to him. Christ made him as his equall; his familiar friend; he did eate of his bread; he had favours in commune with the rest of the Apostles; and yet played the traytor to Christ: this, Christ upon this occasion (you know) declared. When the holy Ghost after a transcendent manner, fell upon the Apostles, that they spake with divers tongues, some sons of Belial mocked them and said, *These men are full of new Wine*; then was a speciall Gymnasticall occasion for Peter to declare his uprightness, for the glory of God, and for the credit of that honourable society of which he

was:

was: to declare to all the world that they were not drunken, as the blinde worldlings conceived, but transcendently filled with the holy Ghost; which the Apostle seriously considered, and answerably with much courage he declared himselfe. But Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said, Ye men of Iudea and all ye that dwell at Ierusalem, be this knowne unto you, and hearken unto my words: for these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third houre of the day; but this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel, &c. Act. 2. 14, 15, 16.

Nationall occasions and times for the declaration of sincerity after a speciall manner, are, when good or evill after a speciall manner is conversant about in relation not to this or that particular person, but to a whole Nation. When bloody Pharaoh would have destroyed all Israel, then was a speciall Nationall occasion, for Moses and the rest of the worthies of the Lord, to declare their sincerity, for the glory of God, and the good of his Church; which Moses seriously considered and answered.

Exo. 10. 26

answerably, with much courage carried himselfe towards *Pharaoh*, upon all occasions, though a King: he told him his owne, and held him strictly to Gods termes; and though he shuffled and shifted, and went forth and backe as a halting rotten Prince, to worke *Moses* about to decline a little from Gods will, yet so sincerely did *Moses* declare himselfe to God and all his people, that he would not yeeld to *Pharaoh* a hoofe, nor swerve from a tittle of what God bid him to stand for. So when *Balaam* would have cursed all *Israel* for wealth and honour, then was a speciall Nationall occasion, for all Israelites indeed, to declare their sincerity, by wrestling with the Lord by prayer, to countermine all his enchantments, which they seriously considered, and answerably with much unweariednesse doubtlesse did, or else doubtlesse God would never have withstood *Balaam* in that admirable manner as he did, and have forc'd him still to blesse, when he meant to curse. When *Israel* committed whoredome with the daughters of

of M
Baal
king
was
Mose
love
lives
ly c
much
the I
men,
25.5
a mo
and C
all at
great
alone
Natio
to de
loved
all h
world
loved
have
heath
more
seriou
declar

of Moab, and joyned themselves unto Baal-Peor, and the anger of the Lord kindled, threatening to destroy all, then was a speciall Nationall occasion for Moses, to declare his sincerity, that he loved the glory of God above the lives of his brethren, which he seriously considered and answerably with much courage did. *And Moses said, unto the Judges of Israel, slay ye every one his men, that were joyned to Baal-Peor, Num.* 25.5. So when Israel had made them a molten Calfe in the absence of Moses, and God would have destroyed them all at once, and have made Moses a great Nation if he would have let him alone in his way, then was a speciall Nationall occasion indeed for Moses to declare his uprightnesse, that he loved the lives of his brethren, above all honours and preferments this world could afford him, and that he loved the glory of God (which would have beene much blemished by the heathen, if he had destroyed Israel) more than his owne life; which he seriously considered, and answerably declared himselfe. And Moses returned

O

unto

unto the Lord, and said, *Oh this people have committed a great sinne, &c. Yet now if thou wilt forgive their sinne, and if not, blot me I pray thee out of thy booke, Exod. 32.31,32.* When Israel halted betweene God and Baal, making a mixture of divine worship and idolatrous together, one to colour the other, that poison might be swallowed without scrupling, to the speedy and unsensible perdition of soules, then was a speciall Nationall occasion for the Prophets of the Lord to declare their uprightnesse, in crying against halting, not fearing man who shall be made as grasse; which *Elijah* seriously considered, and answerably with much courage carried himselfe. *And Eliab came unto all the people; and said, how long halt ye betweene two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him: and the people answered him not a word.* When *Azariah* the Prophet told *Asa* and all *Juda*, that their halting in Gods worship, was the cause of all their troubles, and that if they did zealously returne to that purity of divine worship, which God required, and

and shake off mans inventions, it should goe well with them; and that God would still bee with them for good, and not for hurt, as he had been; then was a speciall Nationall occasion for that people to declare their sincerity; their love to the purity of Gods ordinances, more then to their owne inventions; which they seriously considered, and answerably with much zeale and life did. *And they entred into a covenant, to seeke the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soule: that whosoever would not seeke the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman, 2 Chro. 15. 12, 13.* So when Haman had plotted the death of all the Jewes, then was a speciall Nationall occasion for Mordecai and Esther, to declare their sincerity, for the glory of God and the good of his Church; which they seriously observed, and answerably with much courage carried themselves. *Then Esther bad them returne Mordecai this answer. Goe gather together all the Jewes that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither*

eat nor drinke three daies, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise, and so will I goe in unto the King, which is not according to the Law, and if I perish, I perish. *Esther* 4. 15, 16.

The reasons why God in the course of his providence, brings about, speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, are these ; First, that the world and the divell may see, that his people are indeed sincere. Speciall occasions of triall, are like *Nebuchadnezzars* fiery Furnace, heat seven times hotter then ordinary, which will thoroughly discover Gold from drosse. These made knowne *Iobs* sincerity so universally, that all mouthes were stopt, which strangely thought and spoke of *Iob* before. Tis very common with the divell and his children, to account and call Gods people hypocrits; such as doe not serve God for nought, but follow Christ for loaves, and profess religion for their owne ends. Now God to convince these censorious wretches, that judge amisse of the generation of the just, brings his children as'twere upon the stage, in the open

open view of all, and puts them upon speciall trials of their uprightnesse; he sets them such taskes of doing or suffering, that shall stretch every veine in their bodies, and convince all beholders, yea the divell and all his children, that they are sincere; and make them confesse with *Saul*, that they are more righteous, then themselves. As there be some starres, which by divine institution are invisible to us, & others visible, to declare the glory of God, and to be of use for man: So those stars which God hath placed in the lesler world, to wit, the soule of man, some of them God would have to be as it were invisible to the world; God would have a Christian modestly, & humbly to conceale as much as may be, many gifts, but others againe God would they should declare them as much as may be, to his glory and the good of others, as love, and sincerity, that they may sparkle in the eyes of all the world, as glorious beames of the divine Image. Now man being too backward to this worke voluntarily, God makes and fits occasions and times for

the very purpose, that shall sift a man thoroughly, and sound his heart to the bottome, and turne his inside outward, and so declare his sincerity or hypocrisie to all the world. As God knowes who are his; so he will have the divell and his children to know also who are his; that they may walke as selfe-condemned wretches, as *Saul* did, for persecuting of them. Now, to effect this, this is the thing God does, *viz*, he makes bitter pills for his children to swallow, heavie burthens for his children to beare, such as no unsound heart would touch, with one of his fingers; he heates Furnaces seven times hotter then ordinary, and throwes his children into them; one thing or other God so orders, that shall put his people to it, to see what mettle they be made of; that shall anatomise every string in their hearts, so that the Divell, and all his children, to their conviction and torment, shall read sincerity written in their hearts, with capitall letters.

2

The second reason why God in the course of his providence, brings about speciall

speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, is, that his owne glory may thereby be greatly advanced. Speciall cures they winne a name to a Physitian, more then the ordinary cures of seven yeeres practice : likewise speciall victories, win their prime agents more honour, then all the ordinary warfare of their whole life : So God by carrying his people through speciall occasions of triall magnifies the glory of his power, wisdom, and love, more then a thousand ordinary passages of his providence towards them. What a name for power, God wonne to himselfe, in the heart of *Daniel*, and the three children, for enabling them with such courage, to stop the mouthes of Lyons, and to quench the violence of fire ; to expose themselves to the mercy of Lyons, and fire ; rather then to wrong their consciences. This doubtlesse made them more to sing of the power and goodnesse of the Lord, then all the passages of his providence towards them, in the whole course of their lives before. Some skilfull Physitians will make

their men swallow this or that strong poison, that they may shew their skill before multitudes in curing of them, to winne them a name: So God he puts his people to great plunges oft times, that he may winne them a name for ever in their hearts, and in the hearts of all beholders, for wisdom, power, and mercy in carrying them sweetly thorough all, without making shipwracke of faith and a good conscience. This know, that 'tis Gods great worke in this world to advance his owne Name, and to make it great to the ends of the earth: now, amongst the many notable waies, he hath to magnifie his Name, this is one, and not the meanest, to wit, to put his people upon speciall occasions, of the triall of their sincerity, and by these, such an art hath God to advance his owne honour, that he winnes a world of hearts to himselfe at once, that will be so many living Trumpets to sound forth the praise of his greatnesse and goodnesse, from generation to generation.

Thirdly, God by his providence
brings

brings about speciall occasions for the tryall of sincerity, to adde to the torture of the divell and his children. Great trials of the godly, put the divell and his children in hope of their utter ruine. When *Haman* had prevailed so farre, as to get a bloody decree against the Jewes, he then joyed exceedingly, as one that promised himselfe their utter ruine: now God stepping in betweene, and on a sudden turning this triall of *Mordecai's* to his advantage, and to *Hamans* disadvantage, to his honour, and *Hamans* disgrace, no man can tell, nor hardly conceive, how this added to *Hamans* torture. God hath admirable waies, to make wicked men gnash their teeth, before they come to Hell; and amongst the many admirable waies, which God hath for this end, this is not one of the meanest, to put the wicked into a kind of hope, of having their will upon the godly, by giving the godly in part (for trials sake) into their hands, and then on a sudden, snatching them farther out of their power, then ever they were before, and

and making them engins of the downfall of the wicked. This hath made many a proud malicious wretch, hang himselfe, stabbe himselfe, poison himselfe, to wish himselfe any where, so he were but out of the sight and talke of them that feare God.

Lastly, God in the course of his providence, brings about speciall occasions, for the triall and discovery of sincerity, that so the joy of the upright may be augmented, in this life, and in the life to come. Speciall trials of sincerity, sincerely gone through, they procure joy unspeakable and full of glory in this life; and they worke about joy unconceivable and full of glory in the life to come. There is joy in this life for the godly, and joy unspeakable and full of glory. So there is a reward in Heaven for the godly, and a *great reward*, as Christ useth the epithete. *Math. 5.12*. Now, unspeakable joy, God gives to them that undergoe unspeakable trials of their integrity; he gives full flaggons of consolation, to such as have beene soarely shot at, as the expression is used concerning

ning *Ioseph*, *Gen.* 49. 23. & yet have kept faithfull to their God. So the great reward in heaven, is kept for them, that undergoe great trials on earth, and yet hold fast their integrity. As Princes have their waies to advance men to great honour, honourably; to wit, by putting them upon some notable hard and difficult service, and if they acquit themselves well and faithfully in it, then to conferre great honour upon them, not otherwise: So the King of Kings he hath his honourable waies, to advance meane Christians to great spirituall dignities, here and hereafter: and amongst many others this is one, namely, to put them upon speciall trials, and difficult taskes and services, that shall put every nerve and sinew to it; and discharging themselves well and faithfully in these, then he puts a *long white robe upon them, and palmes in their hands*, great spirituall dignities, that so they may be knowne to all, to be such as *came out of great tribulation*, as *John* saith, *Rev.* 7. 14.

This doctrine findeth fault with two sorts of persons, *viz*, Such as of wilfulnesse

nesse, and such as of weaknesse, neglect and passe by speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity.

Men wilfully passe by speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, when they shut their eyes, and will not take notice of such times; out of some selfe-respect. The Prophet *Isaiah* speakes of this sort of men, where he saith; *Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet [will he not] learne righteousness, in the Land of uprightnesse [will he deale unjustly] [and will not] behold the Majesty of the Lord. Lord when thy hand is lifted up, [they will not see:] but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envie at the people, &c. Isa. 26. 10, 11.* God gave speciall times to this generation of men, to mend their manners, and to declare uprightnesse in their conversation to his glory, but though this speciall favour were shewed them, yet *would they not*, so much as set about, to learne righteousness, to acquaint their deluded conscience with what was right; and to be practised by them. God in a very majesticall manner

ner lifted up his hand against them, to crosse and curse them in their corrupt waies, and all to this end, that they should behold it, and take shame to themselves, and breake off from their unrighteous courses, and they wilfully shut their eyes, that they might not *behold the Majesty of God* against them. God gave them (of his rich favour) speciall times and opportunities, to declare uprightnesse, and they made them speciall times and occasions, to declare their pride and rottennesse. There is an iron sinew in the will of men naturally, and therefore let God give never so faire opportunities and occasions to them, to shew themselves for him and for his righteous waies, yet they will not bow and stoope unto it. This iron sinew was in the necke of *Saul*, and therefore God called his sinne, in not slaying all the *Amalekites*, when he gave him a speciall opportunity thereunto, *stubbornnesse and Rebellion*. God saw more into *Sauls* sinne then he, or many of us could imagine. He look'd upon *Sauls* will, in sparing *Agag*, when he

he might have killed him; and God saw that *Sauls* will was resolutely set to doe this, what ever hypocriticall plea he made for himselfe, and what ever expresse charge he had to the contrary. God gave to *Saul* there, a speciall opportunity wherein to declare his sincerity, and he as a selfe-willed wretch, made it a speciall time wherein to declare his hypocrisie, to his utter disgrace and ruine both of soule and body.

Pride and malice are the cause, why men wilfully passe by speciall times, for the declaration of sincerity. God gave to *Herod* a speciall time wherein to declare sincerity, by causing that promised branch, to spring out of the roote of *Iesse* in his time, which roote was thought to have been quite dead. Here was such an opportunity given *Herod*, to declare his love to Christ, by protecting and countenancing of him, as was given to no Ruler before him; and he out of pride and malice, as one that could not endure, that there should be any other King of the Jewes besides himselfe, fought with all his policy

policy and might to kill him, so farre was he from using all his regall power, to protect and fence this choice branch from spoilers. God gave likewise to the learned Scribes and Pharises, speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, by causing him that was the wisdom of God to converse amongst them, and to speake as never man spake, and to doe those things which never man did; that so they (as *Iohn* the Baptist, according to what they had heard with their eares, and seene with their eyes, might magnifie him, and labour as Gods faithfull Ministers in their place, to bring all men to believe on him, and follow him; and they out of pride and malice, used all their craft and might, to crush him in the shell, to nip him in the very bud, to cloud his glorious sunne, as soone as risen, that none might see his light and walke in it.

Such wretches as these, who wilfully shunne speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity, must be told this, That their sinne is very great, and answerable shall be their punishment

ment; unlesse they repent. That your sinne is great, appears by the example of *Saul*, sinning in this very kind. God gave him a speciall occasion, to declare his sincerity to him, when he gave all the *Amalekites* into his hands; he wilfully taking his owne course, and pleasing his owne humour, you know how God calls this sinne, viz, *Stubburnnesse*; *Rebellion*; rebellion parallel to *Witch-craft*, *Rejecting the word of the Lord*. God will no otherwise account your sinne, who now wilfully passe by occasions and opportunities of declaring your sincerity to him. He will account your practice, *stubbornnesse*: and did any man ever stout it out with God, and prosper? He will account your practice *Rebellion*: and did ever any man play the rebell against God, that was not hangd and quartered? He will account your practice *a rejecting of his Word*: and for this God will certainly reject you. You know well what heavy punishment God inflicted upon *Saul* for this sinne: he stript him of his Kingdome, nay, he stript him of the holy Ghost,

ten

ten thousand times more worth then his Kingdome, and gave him up to an evill spirit, to be vexed and whorried headlong into great finnes, and great miseries; and according to this proceeding of divine justice, must you looke to be dealt withall. God offers you now golden opportunities, to declare your sincerity to him, by killing all *Amalekites*, every sinne in your soules, which are more abominable to him, then ever was the *Amalekites*, and to the killing of all, he promiseth you his assisting grace, as he caused his victorious arme to goe along with *Saul*; and if now you wilfully spare some one *Agag*, some fat of the Kine, some finnes, that bring you in pleasure and profit, looke for *Sauls* sauce to such sweet meats. God will take his spirit utterly from you, and give you up to your owne hearts lusts, to commit wickednesse with greedinesse, to the aggravation of your condemnation.

Secondly, the doctrine in hand, finds fault with such as passe by speciall occasions and times, for the declaration of sincerity, out of weakenesse: under

P

this

Pares decato, supplicio pares.

Est debilitas culpabilis, sicut excusabilis.

*Ignorantia
norma, ig-
norantia
culpabilis,
sist.*

this head foure sorts of persons are to be reprov'd. First, such as through ignorance passe by speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity. Many men in place have often by the providence of God, speciall occasions and times put upon them, for the declaration of their sincere love to Christ and his members, but being ignorant of what is indeed sincerity, to wit, what is indeed right, and the thing to be stood for, doe nothing, shew themselves neuters, or else doe as the most doe. Some though they have a long time lived in the light, and should be able to distinguish betweene light and darkenesse, yet through a carelessse improvement of the light, and resting in customes, know not what is indeed the exact will of God to be stood for; and therefore when they are by the providence of God, brought upon the stage, to set their seale to Gods truth, they as fooles, say and doe they know not what.

Others there are, who though not ignorant of what is indeed right and good, but yet ignorant of the danger which

w
a
fin
or
th
pr
of
fo
go
wh
rat
wh
the
the
8.6
him
jud
cer
is o
as C
min
righ
rant
be d
exa
agai
it,
gain

which may ensue upon the neglect of any opportunity for the declaration of sincerity, passe by one speciall occasion, and promise to themselves another, and God peradventure presently proceeds against them in a strict way of judicature, to the deserting of their soules, and never brings about such a golden opportunity more unto them, wherein to shew themselves so admirably for him. *Salomon* points at this where he saith, *Because to every purpose there is time and judgement; therefore the misery of man is great upon him, Eccl. 8.6.* The misery of man is great upon him indeed, that is either ignorant of judgement (1) of what is right, and sincere; or that is ignorant of time: that is of such speciall and fit opportunities as God offers to man, for the performing of, and standing for, what is right and good. You that are ignorant of judgement; of what is right to be done or suffered, you will by the example of others be drawne to stand against right, instead of standing for it, as did the ignorant multitude against Christ, concerning whom the

Apostle speakes thus, *That had they known it, they had not crucified the Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. 2.8. The ignorant Jewes not knowing *judgement*, were by the example of the learned Scribes and Pharises, drawne to stand against Christ, instead of standing for him, and so pulled the guilt of innocent blood upon them, which is not yet washed off.

You that are ignorant of *time*; of the speciall occasions and times, which God in the course of his providence brings about, for the declaration of sincerity, and of the dangers which ensue thereupon, must be told this, That you will open great gaps unto evill, ere you are aware. Old *Ely* not taking that speciall occasion given him, to declare his sincerity, by a due punishment upon his sonnes, they grew horribly wicked, and Gods wrath grew quickly unquenchably hot.

Secondly, let me tell you this, That you blindfoldly passe by the choysest times of your life, to advance your owne happinesse both here and hereafter.

after. *Phinehas* for taking that special time which God gave him, to declare his sincere love to him, wonne a great deale of honour to himselfe and posterity. And so likewise *Levi*, who tooke hold of that special time that God gave him to declare his sincerity; *Who said to his father and to his mother, I have not seene him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren; nor knew his owne children*, *Deut. 33. 9.* wonne unspeakeable honour. So likewise *Abraham* in taking that special time which God gave him, to trie the sincerity of his love in putting on to sacrifice his onely sonne, won incomparable dignity.

Secondly, such as through carnall feare passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, are here to be blamed. This I thinke was *Pilats* case. God gave a special time unto him, for the declaration of sincere love to Christ, when Christ was brought as a malefactor before him, and yet nothing worthy of death or of bonds could be found against him. But *Pilat* out of feare to displease the Jewes,

passed by this golden opportunity, and passed Sentence upon the innocent. This was *Peters* weakenesse. God gave him a speciall occasion for the declaration of sincere love to Christ, when the Damosell so hardly put him to it, and yet he out of feare, passed by this golden opportunity, & denyed Christ with all vehemency, which he should with all boldnesse and fervour then have confessed.

Such as these may doe well to keepe these two Scriptures still in their minds: *I, even I am he that comforteth you, Who art thou that shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the sonne of man that shall be made as grasse, Isa. 51. 12. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny, before my father which is in Heaven, Math. 10. 33.*

Secondly, such may doe well also to consider this, That they will brand their name with everlasting reproch; rob God of more honour, through their cowardlynesse, then their soules are worth, though rated above all this world; and rob themselves of the spirit of glory, which rests transcendently

upon

upon suffering Christians, as *Peter* speakes, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14.

Thirdly, such as passe by speciall times for the declaration of sincerity, through carnall perswasion, are here to be blamed. The man of God which cryed against the Altar at *Bethel*, was faulty in this kind. God gave to him a speciall occasion to declare his sincere love to him, when that old Prophet perswaded him to doe contrary to his commission, but he being overborne with the smooth language of the Prophet, returned backe with him, and did eate bread and drinke water, contrary to the expresse command of God. How the man of God was handled for this, such shall doe well to thinke of, that are apt to have an eare open to carnall counsell and perswasion, to be turned thereby from taking hold of speciall times for the declaration of sincerity. Three examples more there be, which are most worthy of these mens consideration, which would have this weakenesse cured in them. The first is the example of *Joseph* in his carriage to his Mistris; He

would not admit of discourse with her, nor stand to hearken to her unclean perswasions, but speedily breaks away from her company and counsell both. The second, is the example of *Paul*, that would not consult with flesh and blood, when he was to take hold of speciall occasions and times, for the declaration of his sincere love to Christ. The third is the example of Christ himselfe, in his carriage to *Peter*, who when he sought to perswade him to spare himselfe, said, *Get thee behind me Satan.*

4.

Fourthly, such as out of carnall pity, passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, are by this doctrine to be blamed. Good old *Ely* was faulty in this kind. Out of pitty to his sonnes he forbore to doe that which he should have done, to have declared his sincere love to the glory of God. Let such as are faulty in this kind, thinke on *Elies* misery to humble them; and on these divine examples following, to reforme them. Thinke on *Levi*, who sheathed his sword in the bowels of his brethren,

nay,

nay, he knew not his father nor mother, no, nor the children of his loynes, that he might declare his sincere love to the glory of God, when opportunity was offered. Thinke on *Gideon*, who threw downe the Altar of his father, that he might declare his sincere love to God, when he called him hereunto. Thinke on *Aſa's* dethroning his mother, and ſtamping her idols to powder, 2 *Chron.* 15. 16. And on *Salomons* denying the request of his good mother *Bathſheba*, when ſhe requested a bad thing, to wit, *Abiſhag* the Shunamite, for *Adonijah*, which was given to lie in *David's* boſome in his old age to keepe him warme, and to cheriſh him. All theſe worthies were not ſwayed by fooliſh pittie; but looked over all relations, to obey the will of God, and to declare their ſincere love to him, upon all occaſions offered.

Wherefore:

The ſecond and laſt uſe of this doctrine, ſhall be for exhortation. Seeing there be ſpeciall times and occaſions for the declaration of ſincerity, and that many have broken thorough all impe-

impediments, to take hold of them, let us also strive thus to doe. Two things I would exhort you to; to observe such times; and secondly, to take fast hold of them. Seeing there be speciall times for the declaration of sincerity, let us give all diligence to observe, when they are by God offered to us. Shut not your eyes against such times; nor through ignorance, and carelesse-ness over-looke such times.

Quest.

But how should I know speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity?

Ans.

I answer, by these three things. First by the dependancy of Gods glory and thine owne eternall good, upon times, occasions, and actions. If the glory of God, and thine owne eternall good depend much upon the doing or suffering of this or that thing; so depend, that if not performed, both Gods glory and thine owne peace fall to the ground; this is a speciall time and occasion for the declaration of sincerity; and therefore observe it.

Secondly,

Secondly, by strong internall motions and movings to this or that duty, together with the hand of God externally in a speciall manner, by mercies and corrections seconding. 'Tis said (you know) that the spirit of the Lord moved *Sampson* at times in the campe of *Dan*. That is, God after a speciall manner stirred him up now and then, to that great worke of fighting with the Philistins, to which he had assigned him. So likewise now, the Spirit of God doth at times, move mens hearts, after a powerfull and speciall manner, to this duty or that, to the mortification of this lust or that; and seconds this strong internall motion, by such mercies and corrections, as may most suitably tend to further this motion, and spurre on backward man, to the performance of this duty. This is a speciall time for the declaration of sincerity; observe it. *Balaam* (doubtlesse) had speciall motions and internall stirrings not to goe about to curse *Israel*, and the Angell of the Lord without seconding to hinder him; and yet for all this sword within, and sword with-

without, he would on. You that will doe as he did, must looke to fare as he did. So on the other hand, *Mordecai* (doubtlesse) had strong internall motions and stirrings to labour for the good of the Jewes, and the downefall of proud *Haman*; and the providence of God externally, after a speciall manner seconding; which he observed, and answerably moved in this golden opportunity, and so wonne much honour to God, to himselfe, and good to his Church.

Thirdly, by the word of God. The word of God is so full and perfect, that it plainely sets before every man that studies it, what is of weight to be done, and what is of moment not to be done. It sets forth things to be done, or not to be done, with all the circumstances about them, which makes them of more speciall consequence or lesse. So that if a man looke upon an action or occasion by the word of God, he shall presently be able to see, of what consequence the thing is, and how answerably he is to move in and about it, whether with
ore

more or lesse care and diligence. Hence 'tis that Christ willed those which he urged to imbrace him, to teach the Scriptures concerning him; intimating that there they should see, of what consequence this worke was, of imbracing Christ, and following him.

Secondly, as I would have you to take notice, so I would have you to take hold of speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity. When you have espied these golden opportunities, fasten upon them.

But how should I take hold of these golden opportunities aright?

Quest.

I answer, the taking hold of these golden opportunities aright, consists in these three things, *viz*, That a man when such times are brought about to him, by the providence of God, set himselfe, first, speedily; and secondly, thoroughly, to answer them; and thirdly, that he goe about all in the strength of Christ. First a man that would take hold aright of speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity, must be speedy in this worke.

Time

Time, we say, tarries for no man. And opportunity is the extract, and quintessence of time, and farre more gliding. Opportunity let slip, possibly a man may have never such another, though he should live an hundred yeares. Hence 'tis that Christ speakes so dolefully to *Ierusalem*, which had slipt her opportunity, *O Ierusalem, Ierusalem, if thou hadst knowne in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hidden from thine eyes.*

Secondly, as you must set your selves speedily, so you must set your selves throughly to this worke, if you would take hold of these golden opportunities aright. That is, you must set your selves to declare sincerity, answerable to the occasions and speciall opportunitie which God offereth. For this is to take hold of these precious opportunities aright, to wit, whē speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity present themselves, after a speciall manner, to declare our sincerity in them. When a speciall occasion of this kinde was offered to *Paul*, by *Peters* Judaizing, you know with what courage

rage and spirit *Paul* declared himselfe answerable to the occasion. *To whom I gave place, not for a moment. Whom I withstood to the face, for he was to be blamed,* Gal 2. And *Moses* likewise though a very meeke, quiet, and patient spirited man, yet when a speciall occasion for the declaration of his sincerity was offered, by *Aaron* and the peoples making a Calte, with what a Lyon-like courage did he shew himselfe? And old *Ely* because he did not set himselfe thus to declare his sincerity, when his sons of provoked God, to wit, answerable to that speciall occasion offered, you know what construction God made of his mild cold carriage, in that urgent waighty matter, betweene God and his sonnes.

Thirdly, a man that would declare sincerity aright in all occasions offered thereunto, must set about this worke in the strength of Christ, and not in any strength of his owne. *I will goe in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine onely,* Psalm. 71. 16. *I will goe in the strength of the Lord God, &c.* That is
in

in every designe, and in every businesse I will depend wholly upon the aide and assistance of God, and upon no strength of my owne. Thus we know *David* went against *Goliath*, when he would declare his sincere love to God, whom *Goliath* blasphemed. Thus must we doe when ever we set upon any opportunity, wherein to declare our sincere love to God, or else we shall doe as *Peter*, deny Christ, instead of standing for him answerably to the occasion offered.

Now, that what hath beene said touching this point, of taking hold of golden opportunities offered, for the declaration of sincerity, you may all observe and follow, thinke on these two or three things. God calles for it: Conscience calls for it: Church and State calls for it: Soule and body will else severely smart for it. First, thinke on this, God calls for this at our hands, that we should declare sincerity according to the speciall occasions calling thereunto. *Gather your selves together, &c.* saith the Lord to the disobedient Jewes, and in them to us, before the decree

decree come forth, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you. *Seeke ye the Lord all ye meeke of the earth, seeke righteousnesse, seeke meekenesse: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lords anger.* Zeph. 2. 1, 2, 3. A speciall time was offered, wherein to shew themselves for God and for good, and God called upon them carefully to take it, as they tendered their temporall and eternall good.

God calls us now to the declaration of sincerity, as by his word, so by his workes, both of mercy and justice. God hath loaded us with mercies and corrections of all sorts, and all for this end, that we should declare our sincere love to him, answerable to all opportunities offered hereunto. *Many a time* (as the Psalmist saith) *bath he turned away his anger*, and hath not made a full end of us, when we have highly provoked him thereunto, and all for this end, that we should declare our sincere love to him, answerable to all opportunities offered thereunto. To the language of the Lord by the Prophet *Amos* I may fitly here allude. God

Q

hath

hath withholden the raine from us, when there have beene but three months to the harvest : God hath caused it to raine upon one shire and county, and not upon another : God hath smitten us with blasting and Mildew; and all this to bring us to declare a sincere love to him, according to all opportunities offered ; and yet we are backward hereunto. God hath smitten us with the pestilence againe and againe; and with the sword hath he threatned us againe and againe, and all this to bring us on to declare a sincere love to him, according to all occasions offered ; and yet we are backward hereunto. *Therefore thus will I doe unto thee.* saith the Lord to Israel, *and because I will doe thus prepare to meet the Lord thy God.* O Israel, *Amos 4.* So say I to you, forasmuch as all the milde meanes which God hath hitherto used are not effectuall for this end, to bring us to declare our sincere love to him, according to all opportunities offered, therefore we must expect that God will take some severe course with us for the time to come ; and because

we

we are to expect this at the hands of God, let us prepare to meet the Lord our God. Let every one of us repent of our halting and time-serving past, and for the time to come let us set our selves to declare a sincere love to God, according to all occasions offered.

Conscience calls us hereunto, as well as God. Speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, now so frequently and so openly shew themselves, that every mans conscience tells him, that he should shew himselfe a great deale more then he doth, for God, his King, and Countrey. As in the night the Owles and the Bats looke abroad: so in these darke sad daies of sinne and wickednesse, the eyes of Owles and Bats, the eyes of wicked and secure sinners, begin to open, and their consciences begin to tell them, that they should doe something more now then they have done, for God, and the good of this Church and Kingdome.

Church and State calls for it. They both now with one dolefull voice cry out to us, in the language of the Psalmist: *Who will rise up for me against the*
 Q 2 *evill*

2.

3.

evill doers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? Psal. 94. 16. They know not, neither will they understand, they walke on in darknesse: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. Psal. 82. 5.

Finally, soule and body will else severely smart for it, if we doe not now step in, to take hold of all opportunities for the declaration of sincerity. *Curse ye Meroz* (said the Angell of the Lord) *curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the helpe of the Lord against the mighty, Judg. 5. 23.* This curse may all such expect who now come not forth, to declare their sincere love to Christ and his truth, upon all just occasions calling thereunto. The soules of such Christians as now neglect and put by these golden opportunities, of declaring their sincere love to Christ, will be given up to lukewarmnesse, coldnesse, deadnesse, hardnesse, and some to obstinatenesse, and maliciousnesse against God, and all goodnesse: which are all soule curses with a witness. And such bodies as have in them

them such cursed soules as these, you may assure yourselves, they shall meet with misery enough first or last. Paul intimates something to this purpose, where he saith, *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge,* 2 Tim. 4. 18. Such as take not hold of speciall times and occasions for the declaration of their sincere love to Christ and his truth, may feare that sad things will be first or last, laid to their charge; such as shall make body and soule shake. Let us therefore all, as we love our bodies and soules, and as we professe love to Christ, which should be dearer to us then our bodies or soules, take hold of all opportunities for the declaration of sincerity. As God brings about speciall times and occasions for this end, so let every one of us after a speciall manner, take hold of them, that we may after a speciall manner be honoured of God, both here and hereafter. *Dixi.*

Trinuni Deo gloria.

Edward Goodyear
Booke



Edward Goodyear

Imprimatur

Tbo Wykes.

Febr. 24. 1639



16652